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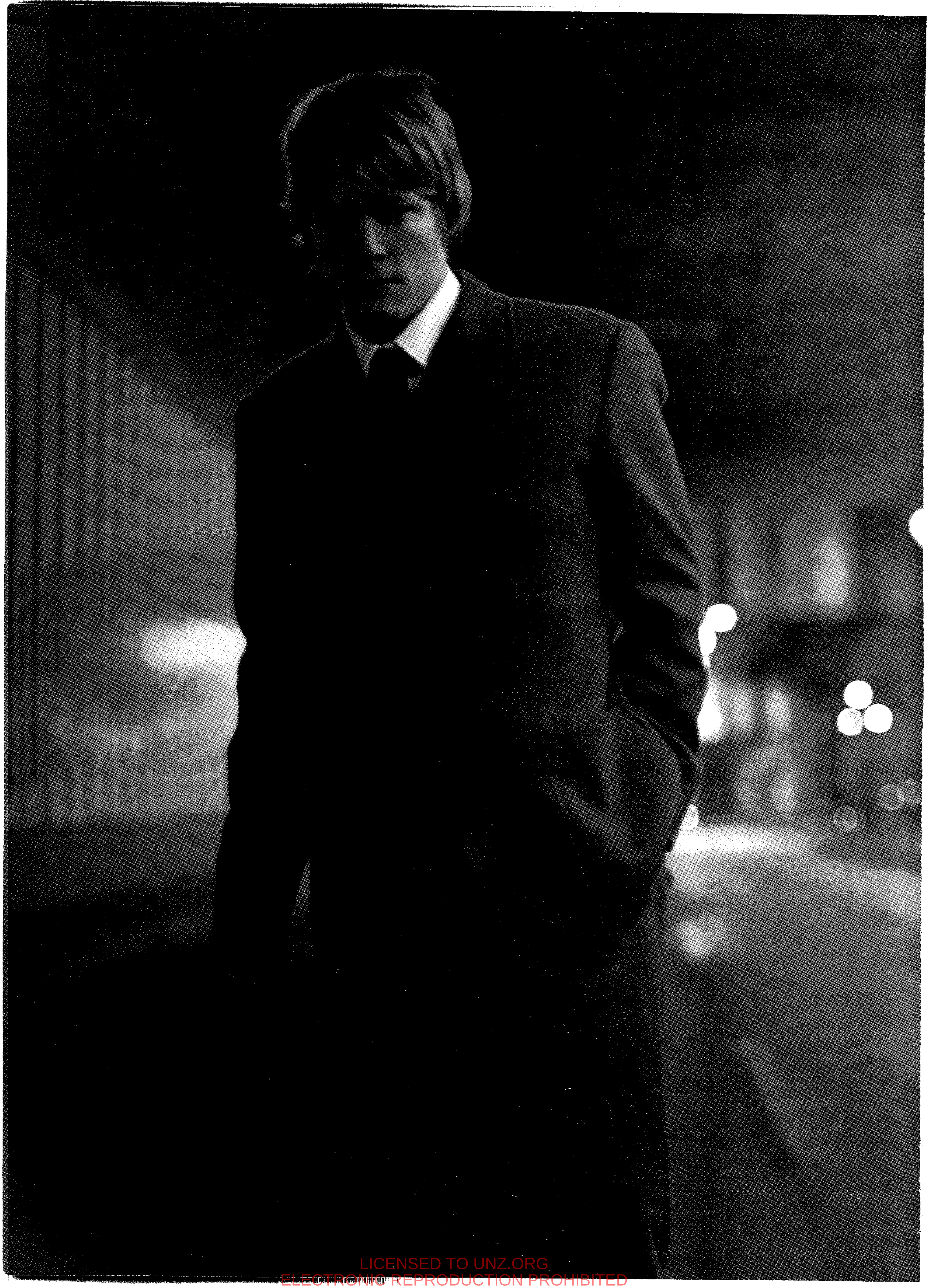

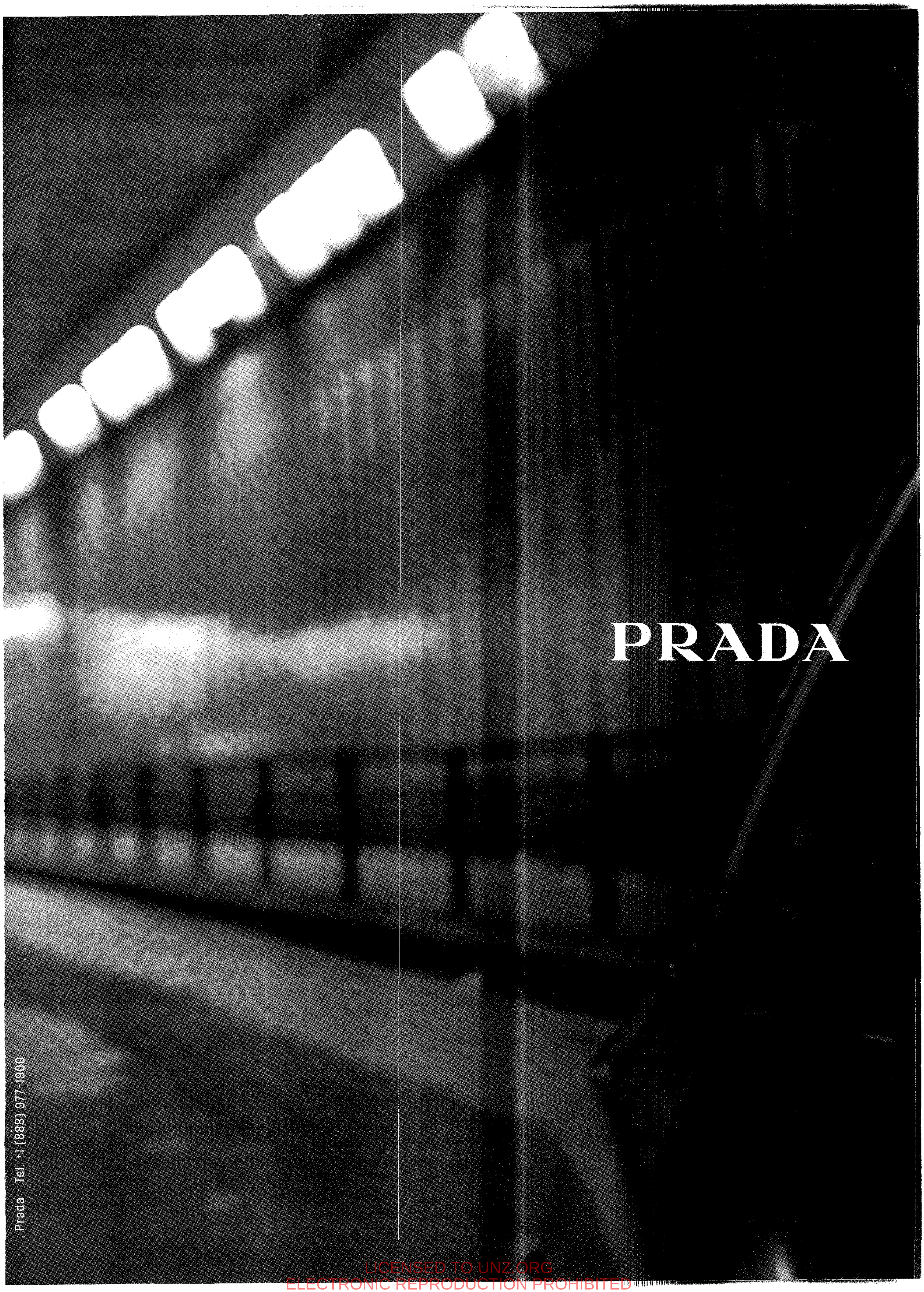
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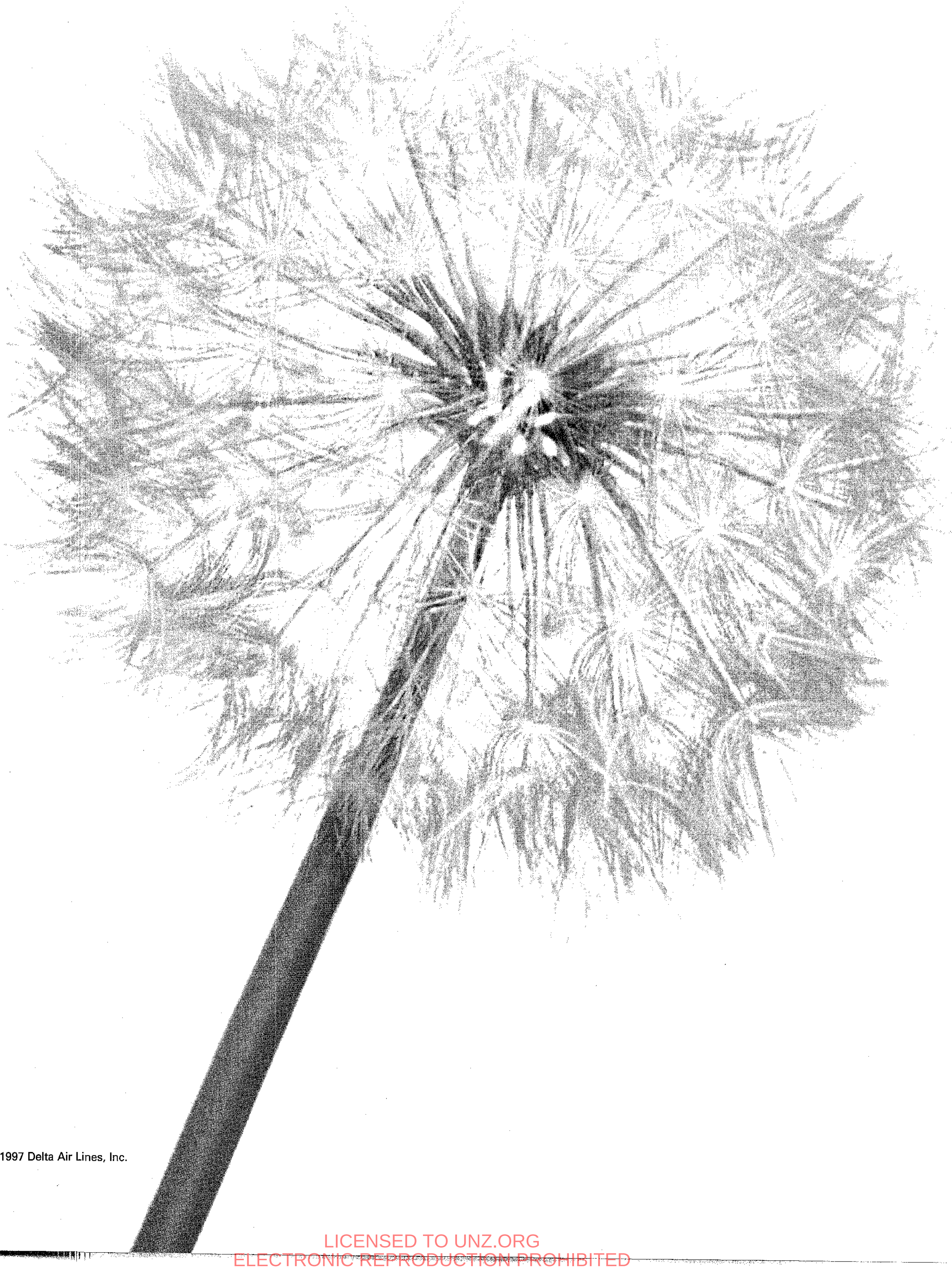

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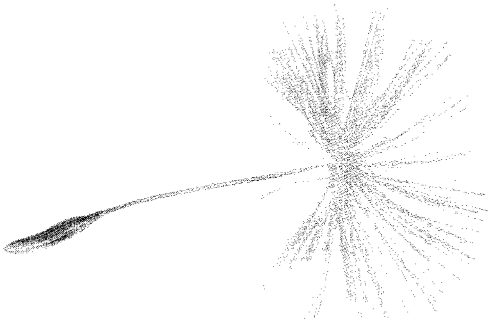

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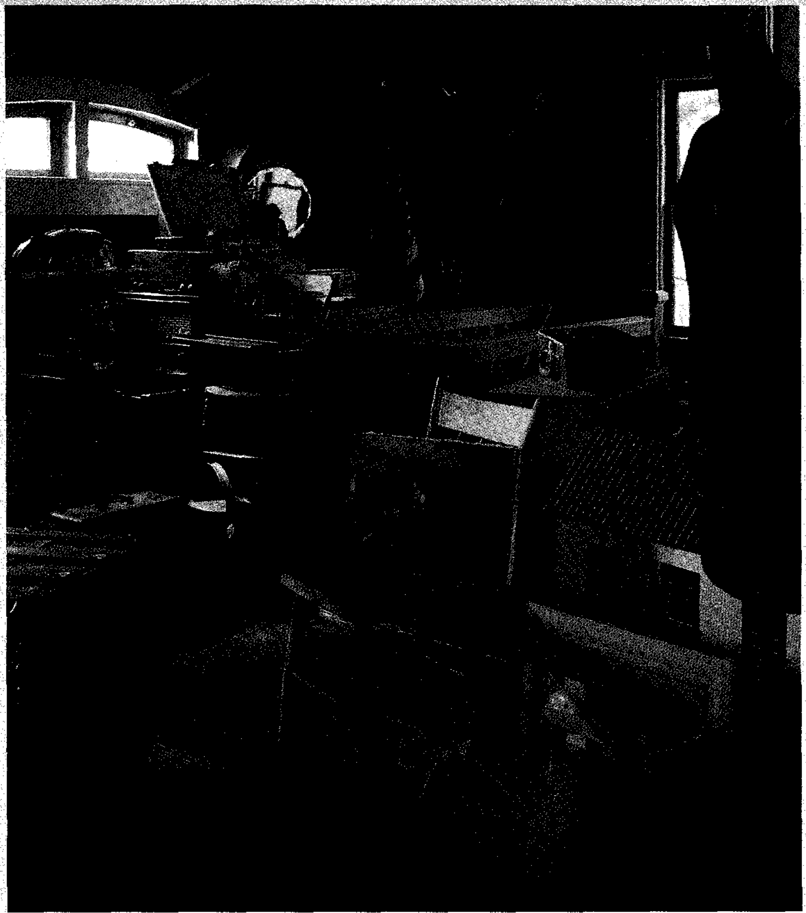

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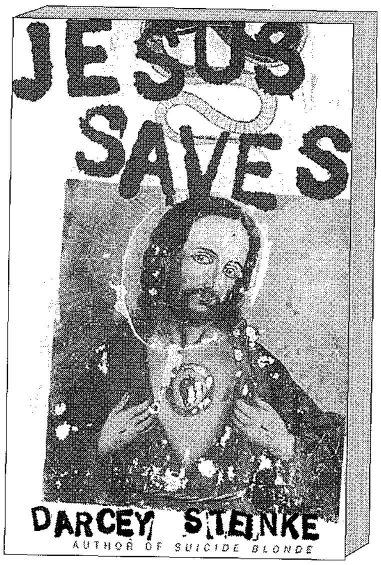

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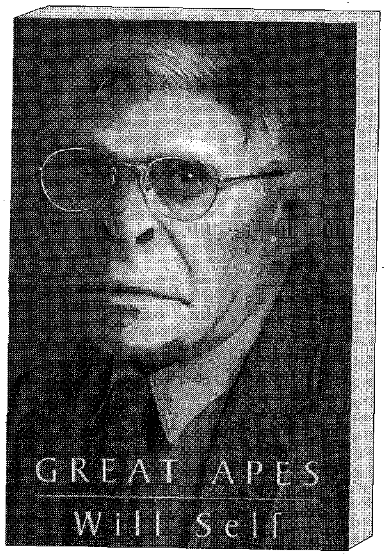

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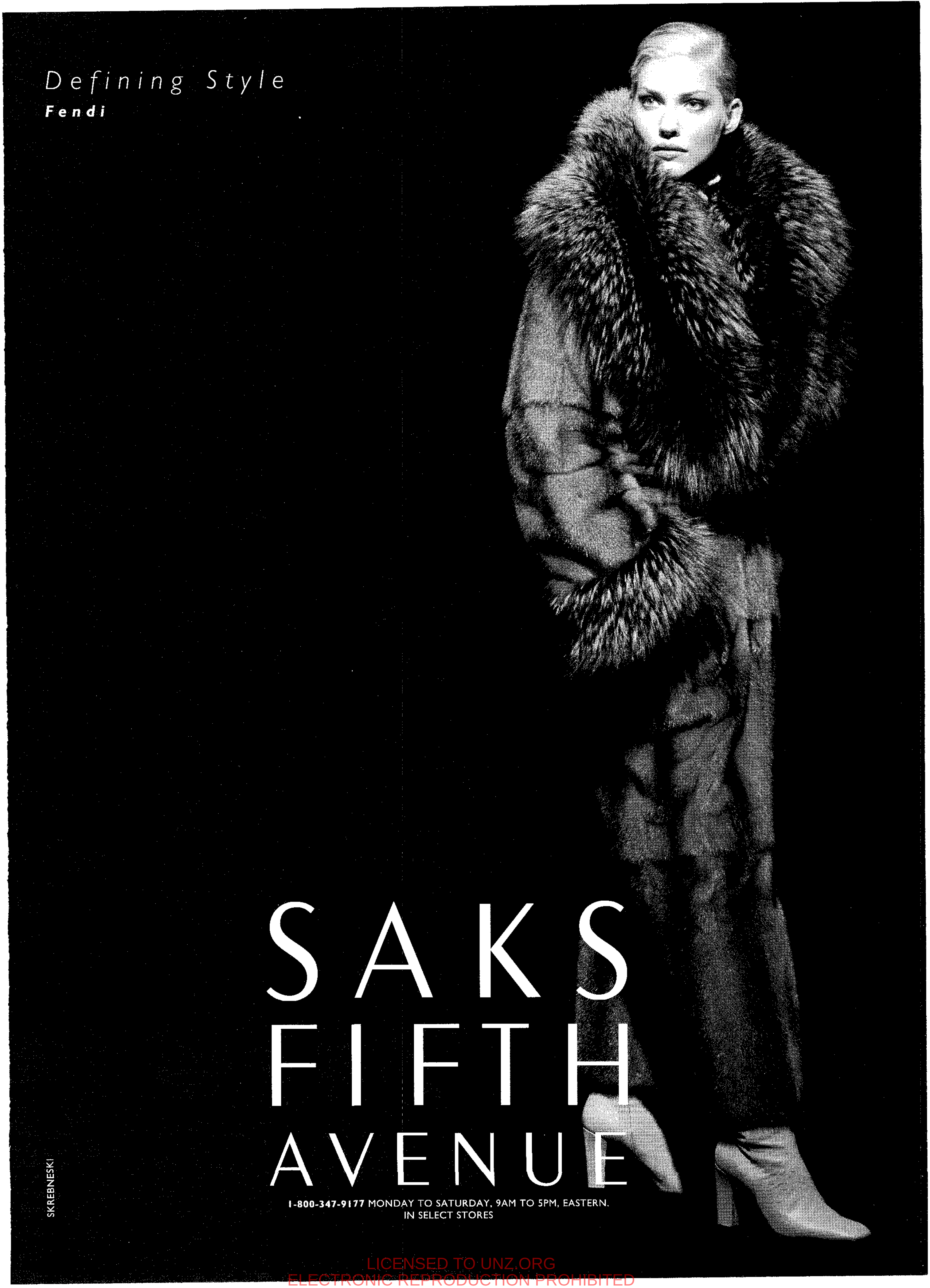

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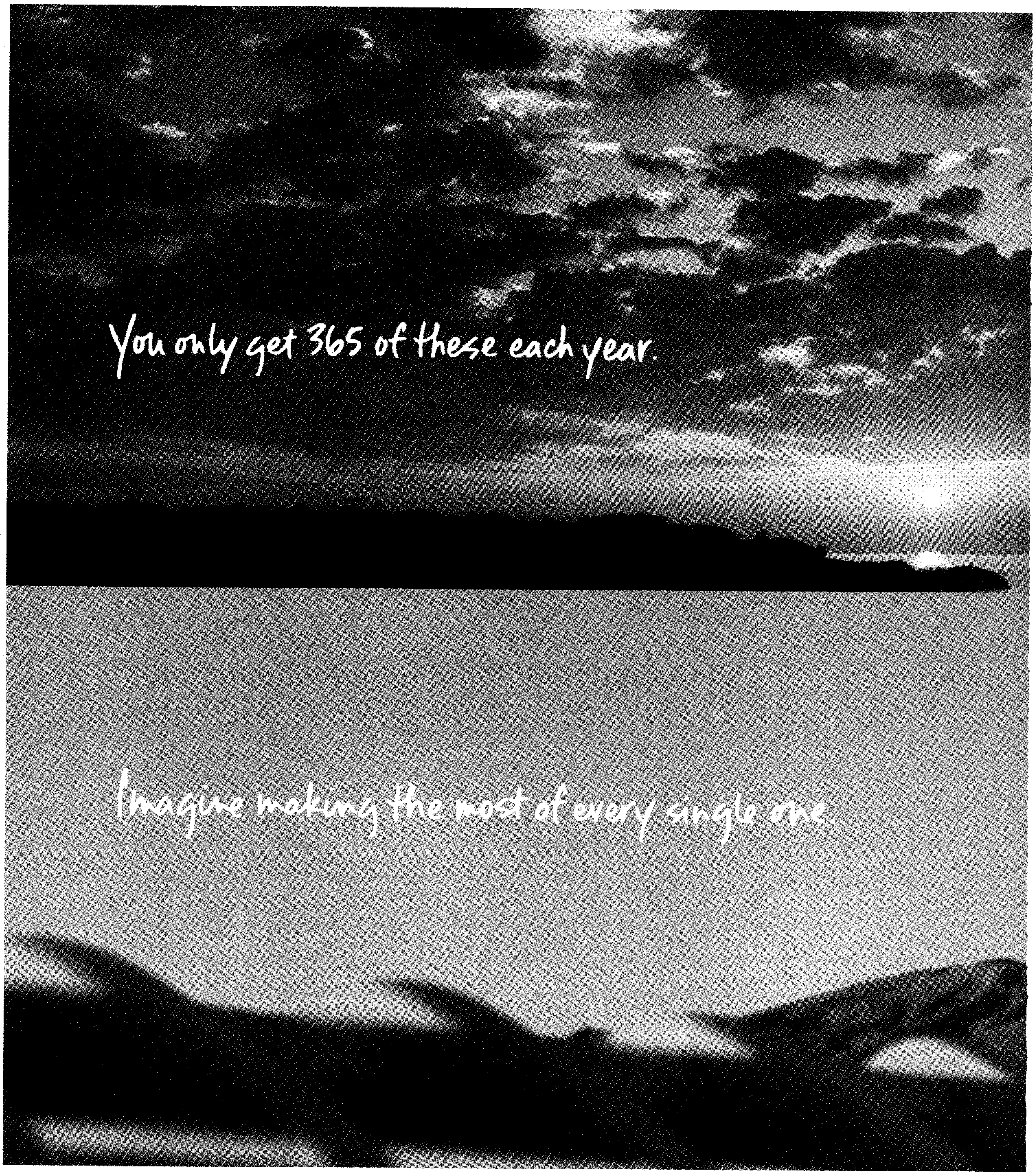
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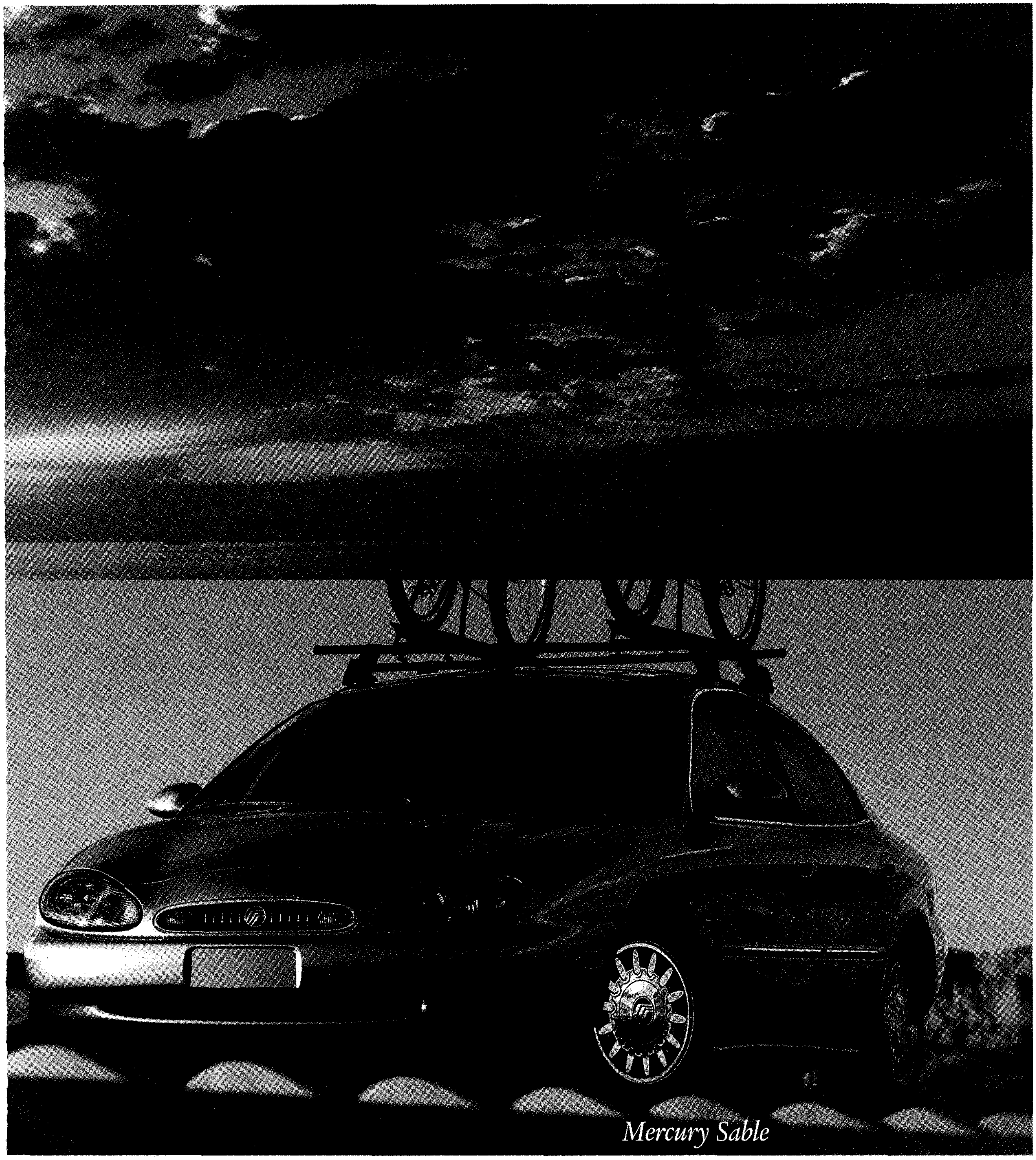

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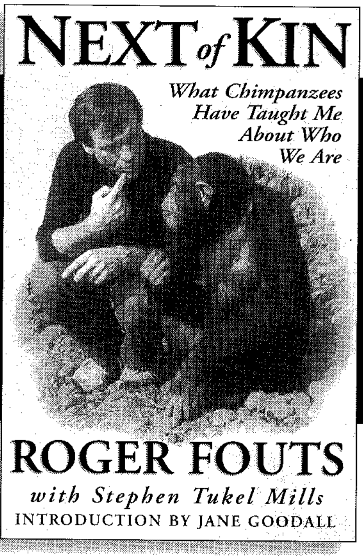
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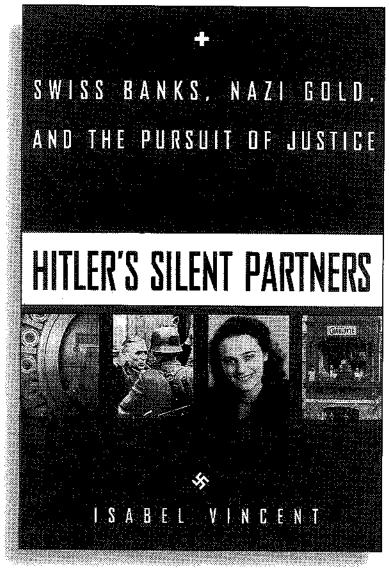
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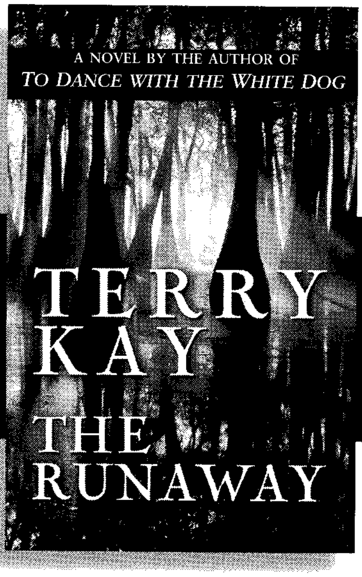
A NOVEL BY THE AUTHOR OF
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TERRY KAY
THE RUNAWAY

Bestselling author of *To Dance with the White Dog* delivers a heart-wrenching novel of black and white friendship amid racial disharmony in the rural South.

WILLIAM MORROW

CONTRIBUTORS

CYNTHIA OZICK ("Who Owns Anne Frank?," p. 76) is the author of fifteen books, including, most recently, "The Puttermesser Papers." She has won numerous awards as an essayist and short-story writer, including four O. Henry Prizes and a Guggenheim Fellowship. She lives near New York City.

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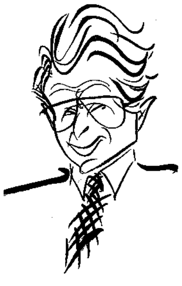

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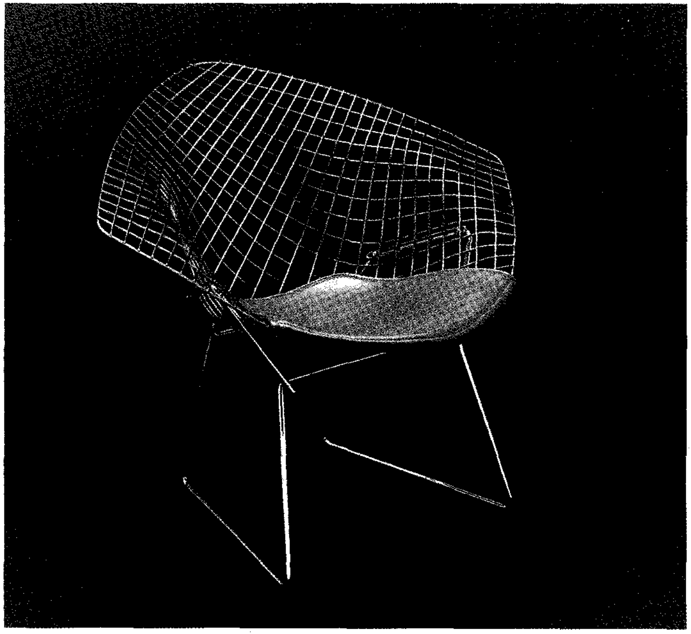

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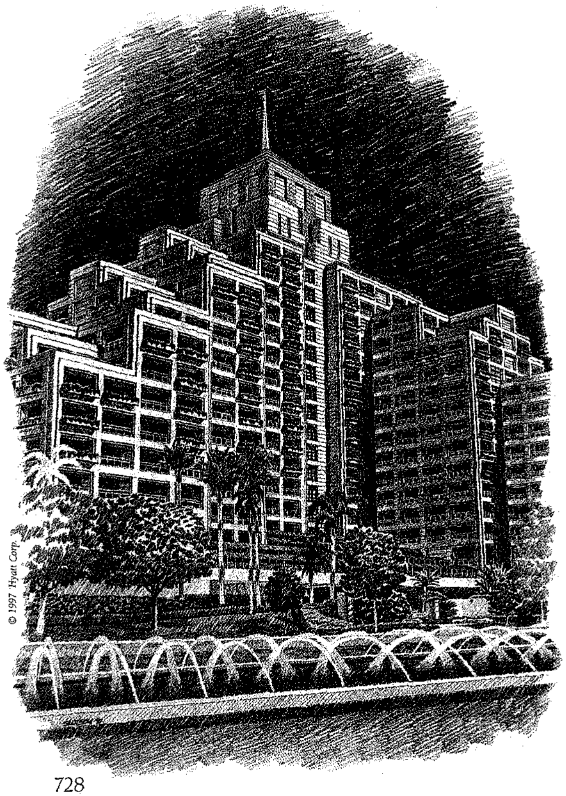

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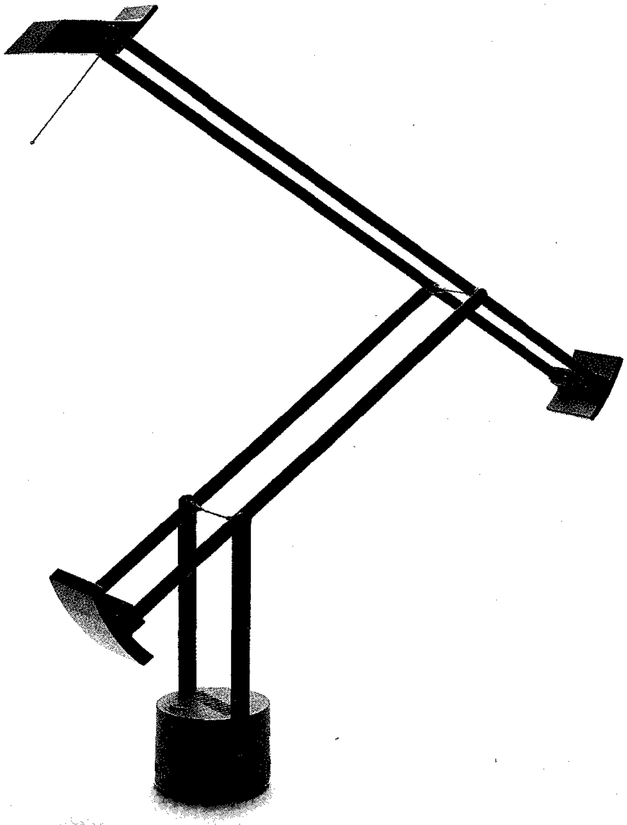

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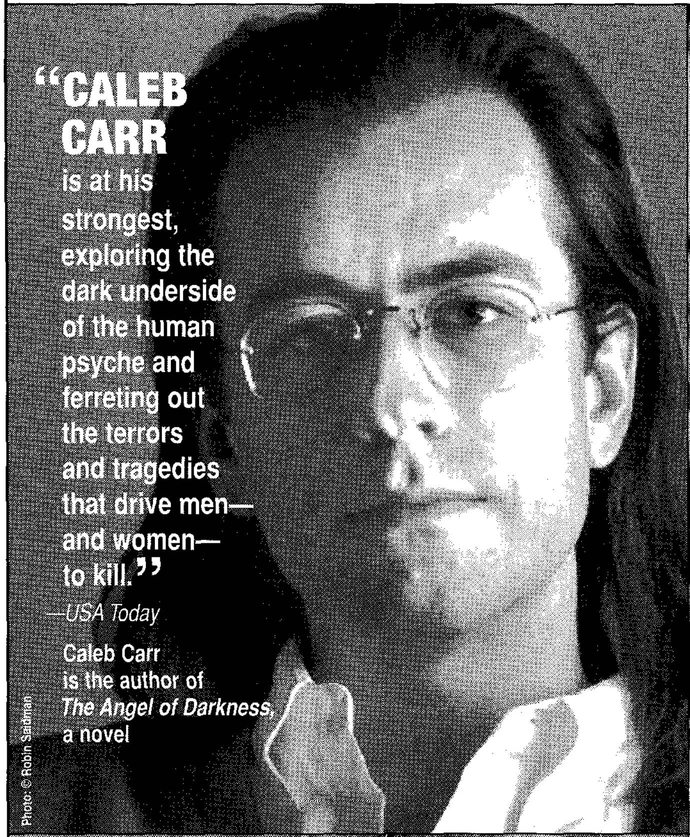

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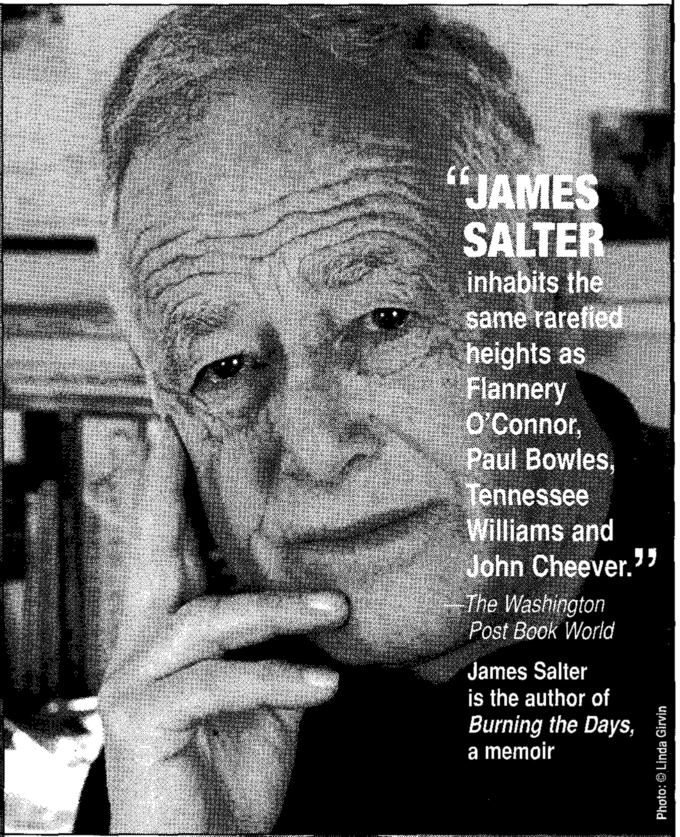

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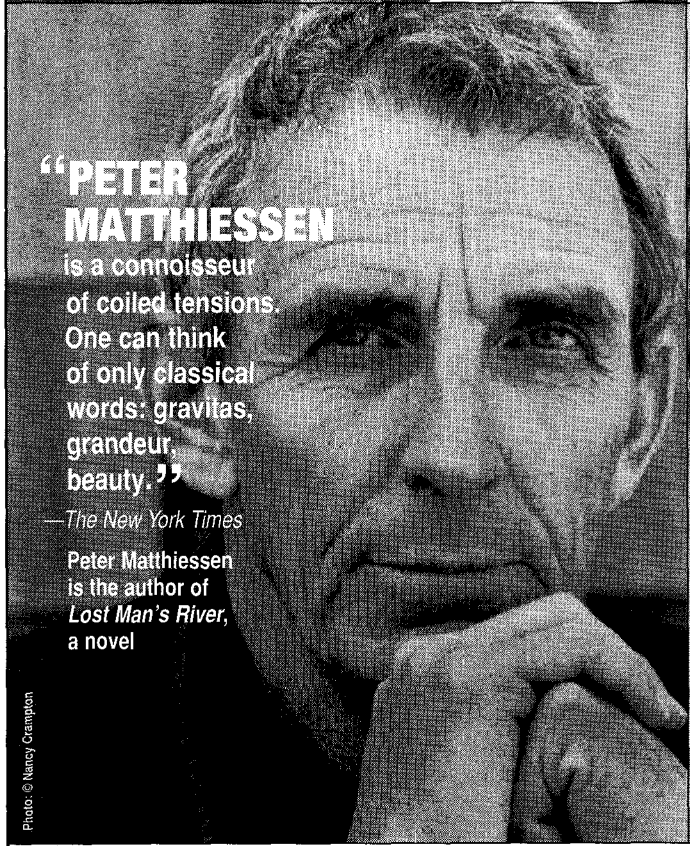

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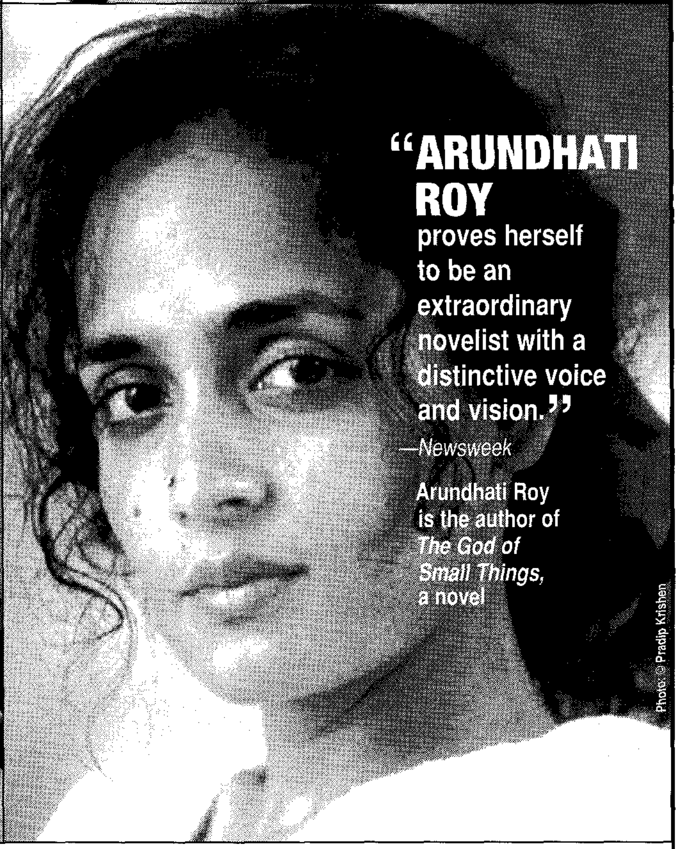

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COMMENT

STONEWALL KABILA

Why the U.N.'s word is as unreliable as the Congo leader's.

In Boston, in 1905, the Congo Reform Association published a pamphlet called "King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defense of His Congo Rule." The text, which was composed by Mark Twain, takes the form of an imagined monologue by the Belgian monarch as he reads through stacks of protest literature about the systematic murder and mutilation of his Congolese subjects by his colonial agents:

> They remark that "if the innocent blood shed in the Congo State by King Leopold were put in buckets and the buckets placed side by side, the line would stretch two thousand miles; if the skeletons of his ten millions of starved and butchered dead could rise up and march in single file, it would take them seven months and four days to pass a given point . . . if they should all clap their bony hands at once, the grisly crash would be heard at a distance of—" Damnation, it makes me tired!

More than tired, the King is cornered. "Blister the meddlesome missionaries!" he says. "They write tons of these things. They seem to be always around, always spying, always eyewitnessing the happenings; and everything they see they commit to paper."

Twain's pamphlet comes to mind these days as the Congo's new President, Laurent Kabila, complains about—and obstructs—an investigation by the United Nations into charges that the rebel forces that carried him to power also perpetrated extensive massacres. Kabila keeps promising the investigative team access to the interior, only to revoke his promises and issue new preconditions. For weeks now, the U.N. sleuths have been stuck in Kinshasa, waiting for government travel approval, which appears more unlikely every day. Kabila's chicanery has won him the moral contempt of editorial writers across America and Europe, and has established that his word is every bit as unreliable as that of the U.N., whose own human-rights record in Central Africa is a tale of cavalier, imperial irresponsibility. Time and again, the U.N.'s false promises of protection have been followed by the swift abandonment of hundreds of thousands of civilians in the face of extreme violence.

The world body's rankest cowardice came with the withdrawal of an armed peacekeeping force—leaving behind a minimal crew—at the outbreak of the Rwandan genocide of Tutsis by Hutus, in 1994; at least eight hundred thou-

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sand Tutsis were killed by Hutus in just a hundred days. Then, with similar impunity, the U.N. returned to house the fully armed forces of genocide in a network of camps in eastern Zaire, as the late dictator Mobutu Sese Seko had renamed the Congo. An escalating campaign of renewed slaughter from the camps sparked the Rwandan invasion last year that quickly evolved into Kabila's rebellion against Mobutu. In the course of the war, Rwandan Hutus from the camps formed the core of Mobutu's defenders. These Hutu fighters, travelling in entourages of men, women, and children, were collectively perceived as fugitive *génocidaires* by Kabila's forces, and this population was the main target of the massacres that Kabila's government is denying ever happened.

The embattled Kabila has lately sounded as though he were lifting his speeches from Twain's script for King Leopold: he fulminates about international "plots," conceived "under the camouflage of humanitarian action," to undermine his already faltering four-month-old regime. And, like Leopold, Kabila is right to feel threatened. Human-rights activism is always a weapon against power, and, if Kabila's political future depends on his rap sheet so far, his prospects for survival in office appear bleak.

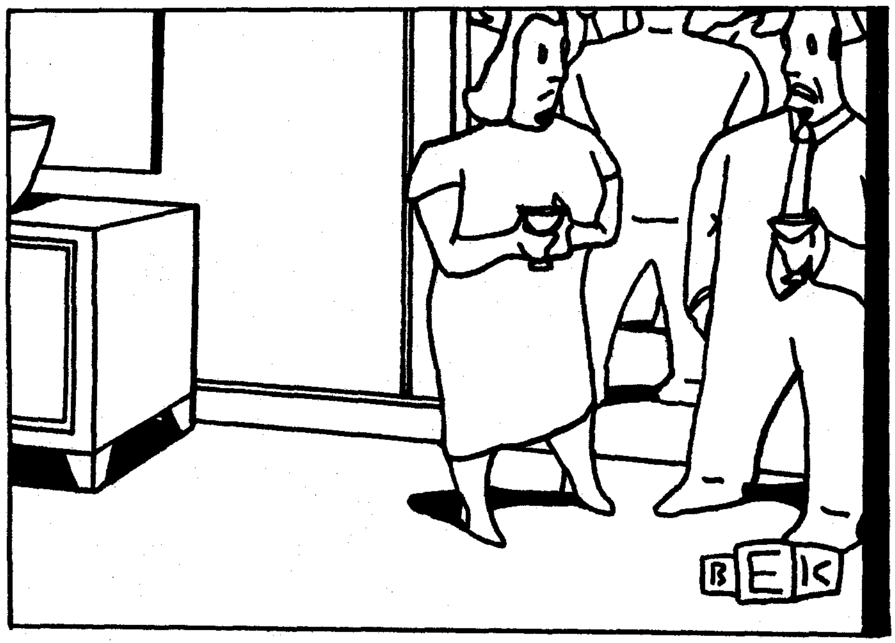
The United States and the European Community have vowed to withhold desperately needed aid from the Congo unless Kabila lets the U.N. investigators complete their mission. The implication is that if he submits to the probe he will get the money. Will he really? Even if his forces are found to have carried out massacres galore? Kabila, ever the rebel, pretends that he is indifferent to foreign aid with such strings attached. He speaks of relying on the "African solidarity" that helped him chase Mobutu into exile. Confronted by an international community that is all stick and no carrot, he says that the Congo "prefers to be poor and free, rather than rich and enslaved," and the nation slaves onward in penury.

It may seem strange that Washington is basing its policy in Central Africa on a human-rights inquest by an organization it does not value enough to support with membership dues. But the extraordinary freedom from accountability which the U.N. provides turns it into a cozy place for any government to take refuge from responsible engagement. As any week's worth of newspaper stories makes clear, it is a measure of a country's insignificance to American policy when the Clinton Administration approaches it exclusively from the human-rights bully pulpit. Nigeria, Croatia, Kenya, and pretty much all of Asia—to pick just a few points on the map—can violate all the rights they like, for all Washington really seems to care. Surely such a highly selective and casual application of the allegedly universal principles of human rights must eventually do those principles more harm than good.

The current standoff in the Congo is the exemplary instance. The U.N., seeking to make up for its grim failures in the region, beats up on Kabila, and Kabila, feeling damned if he submits and damned if he doesn't, stonewalls, and exacts collateral damage from the U.N. For all the high-toned sentiments on both sides, it's hard to imagine that anybody in the Congo stands to benefit from this test of wills. On the contrary, if the situation gets much worse the losses in every direction could make the recent fighting look like warm-up exercises.

One doesn't have to back Kabila to back the Congo, to take a chance and let some money flow—for schools, for medicines, for civil-service and police salaries. Cancel the Mobutu-era national debt, which is nothing but a national insult, and will never be paid back. Send in some agronomists. Take some time, build some trust, and make demands—for the release of a recently jailed journalist, say—firmly and with the promise of rewards. Human rights and democracy have never been imposed anywhere through the humiliation by foreigners of an unsavory leader.

Last week, in an address to the United Nations in New York, President Clinton offered this Aquarian pronouncement: "The forces of global integration are a great tide, inexorably wearing away the established order of things. But we must decide what will be left in its wake." For a long time now, Central Africa has been a nonstop wake. If we in the safer world really want the situation to change, maybe we should stop smugly presuming that we have credibility in the region, and set about establishing it. Or was Mark Twain's King Leopold right to say, at the end of his soliloquy, that the world generally prefers to shudder and turn away? "Why, certainly," he says, "*that* is my protection. . . . I know the human race." —PHILIP GOUREVITCH



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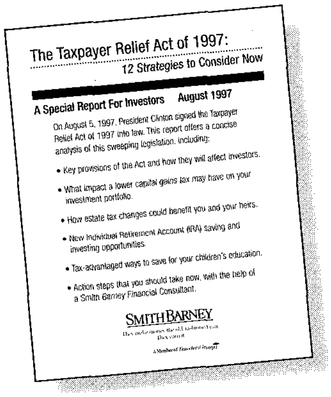

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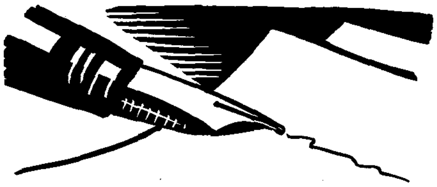


MEDICAL MIRACLES

Jerome Groopman's "The Last Deal" (September 8th) illustrates, perhaps unwittingly, the adage "The operation was a success but the patient died." In this case, Groopman, a talented oncologist, succeeded in pushing Kirk Bains's cancer into remission for a few months, but despite this biological victory Bains's psychology succumbed: he lapsed into passive despair and self-loathing. If he had received psychological care comparable to the outstanding and aggressive care he received for his cancer, he might have been able to bring his "last deal" to a more dignified, peaceful conclusion.

Jacqueline B. Persons
Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry
University of California
San Francisco, Calif.

Dr. Groopman reveals himself to be a magnificent example of a species endangered by health-care reform: the physician with time to think about and talk to his patient. Doctors are under increasing pressure from managed-care organizations to see more patients every hour. Review ninety pages of records, as Groopman did? Hear the patient's life story? Call him every other day? Not in tomorrow's ice age of capitation and cost containment.

Thomas H. Davis, M.D.
Norwich, Vt.

A MODEST PROPOSAL

David Denby, in his Comment "Passion at Yale" (September 22nd), claims that the "known Yale experience" now requires "living in a coed dorm for two years" and describes the religiously based request of the Yale Five for an exemption from this requirement as an example of "self-imposed separations." He is wrong. These students—whom I am proud to represent—want, along with Yale's intellectual benefits, the experience of making friends with and being exposed (albeit modestly) to students who are not Jewish. They are not asking Yale to alter its dorm structure. They seek only the same permission to live off-campus that Yale grants to any student who is twenty-one or older. Such permission would be a minimal accommodation of a conscientious conviction about the surroundings in which one should live—a conviction that is rooted in thousands of years of rabbinic teaching. Denby cannot ignore the fact that Yale does not interfere when a freshman or sophomore who has paid for a dorm room chooses to live off campus (though it would not grant a degree to a student who boycotted all classes). Nor can he really believe that the jostling one encounters on a street or in a classroom is the same as the intrusion on personal privacy produced by coed bathrooms.

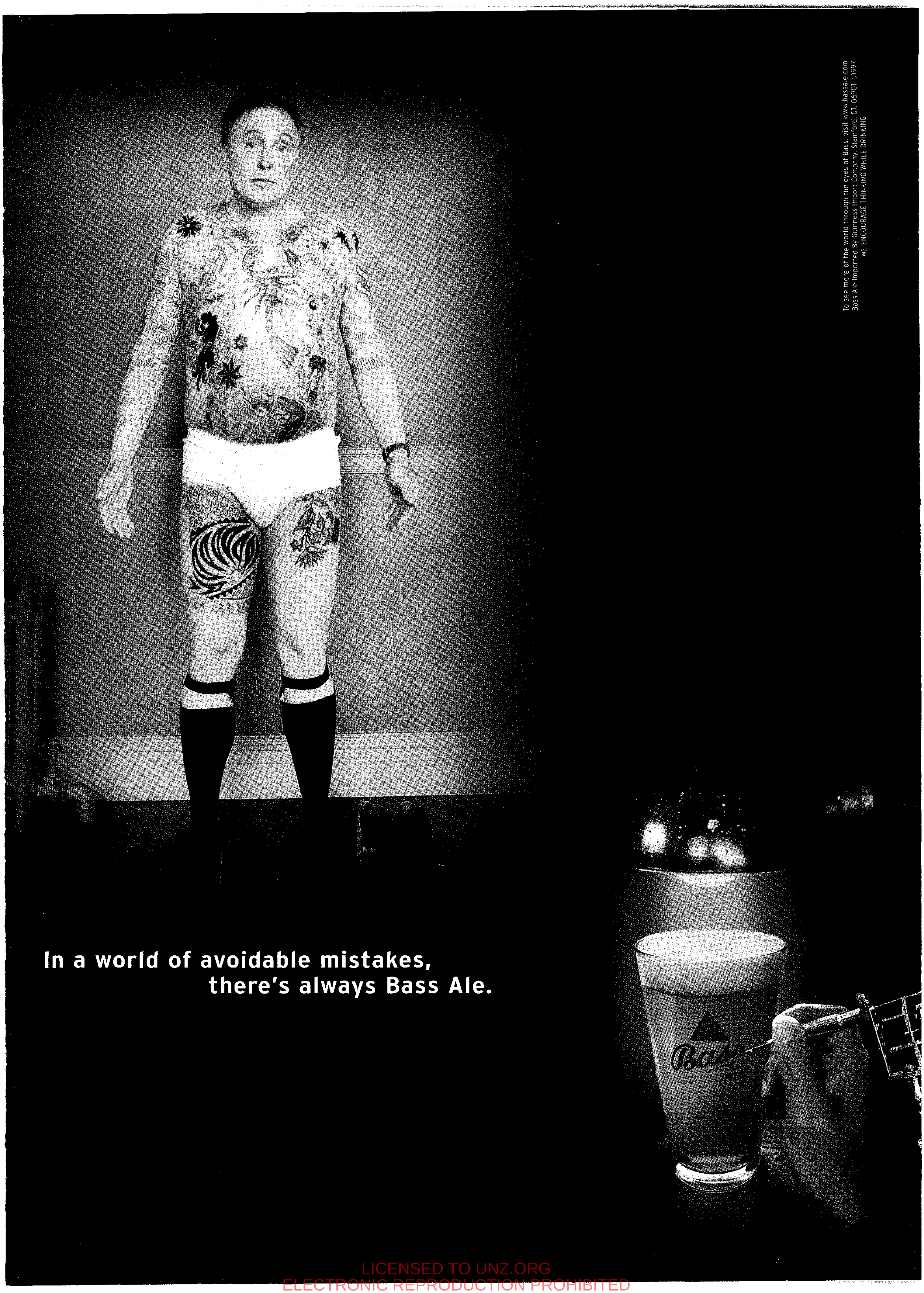
Nathan Lewin
Washington, D.C.

THE "GOOD WAR"

"Travelling," by Grace Paley (Personal History, September 8th), reminded me of my own experience with segregation. In March, 1944, I boarded the last car of a train leaving New York's Pennsylvania Station. A nineteen-year-old private, I was rejoining my battalion after my first furlough. When the train reached Washington, the conductor told me to move forward, because the last two cars were for "colored only." My inclination was to refuse. But I was a Jewish kid from Brooklyn in an outfit commanded by a Mississippi National Guardsman, where I didn't exactly feel at home. I just knew that a report to the C.O. about such an incident would have meant trouble, so I left the last car. As I walked forward I encountered two black second lieutenants who were moving to the rear of the train. Normally, I detested saluting officers, but I purposely gave these two the snappiest salute that I could muster. Fighting against Fascism yet encountering racism in the capital of my own country was a combination that made me permanently uncomfortable in the United States Army.

Martin Goldenberg
Fair Lawn, N.J.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "The Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.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OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Alligator Tales—Manhattan Theatre Club opens the season with a one-woman show written and performed by Anne Galjour, set in Cajun country during the hurricane season. In previews. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

The American Clock—The Signature Theatre Company, now in its new house, begins its Arthur Miller season with the playwright's 1980 drama about a Jewish family's struggles during the Depression. Directed by James Houghton. Previews begin Oct. 7. (555 W. 42nd St. 244-7259.)

Elsinore—The British actor Peter Darling takes on all the roles in director Robert Lepage's multimedia version of "Hamlet." Opens Oct. 7 at 7:30 and runs through Oct. 12. (BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100.)

The First Picture Show—Ain Gordon and David Gordon's work in progress, about the early days of the silent-film industry in America. David Greenspan, Estelle Parsons, and Valda Setterfield are in the cast. Oct. 2-4 at 8 and Oct. 5 at 3 and 8. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

The Irish . . . and How They Got That Way—Frank McCourt's history of Hibernians in America, told primarily through stories and songs. An Irish Repertory Theatre staging, directed by Charlotte Moore. Preview on Oct. 1. Opens Oct 2 at 7. (132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

Le Malentendu—Camus's 1944 tragedy, staged by the Ubu Repertory Theatre, which will offer performances in both English and French. Opens, in French, on Oct. 7 at noon and continues through Oct. 19. (15 W. 28th St. For information, call 679-7562.)

Marc Salem's Mindgames—The mind reader makes use of the audience in his show of mental feats. Previews begin Oct. 3. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.)

More Stately Mansions—New York Theatre Workshop presents the Dutch director Ivo van Hove's staging of Eugene O'Neill's unfinished family drama. In previews through Oct. 6. Opens Oct. 7 at 7. (79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

Queen Amarantha—Ruth Williamson and Marcus Lovett join Charles Busch in his latest play, in which he portrays a princess who decides to live as a man after inheriting her father's throne. Previews begin Oct. 7. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

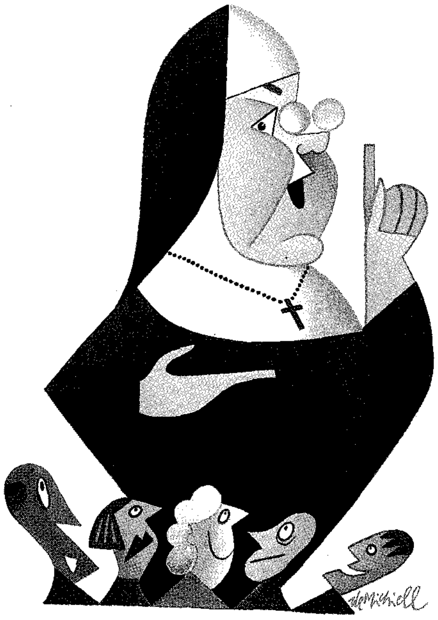
The Quick-Change Room (Scenes from a Revolution)—Economic exigencies transform a production of "The Three Sisters" into a musical comedy in this satire by Nagle Jackson, about a formerly state-run theatre troupe in Russia undergoing perestroika pains. Orson Bean is the director. Previews begin Oct. 7. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

The Scarlet Pimpernel—A musical version of the 1905 Baroness Orczy novel, starring Christine Andreas, Terrence Mann, and, in the title role, Douglas Sills. With music by Frank Wildhorn and a book and lyrics by Nan Knighton. Peter Hunt is the director. Previews begin Oct. 7. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Side Show—The story of the Siamese twins Daisy and Violet Hilton (Emily Skinner and Alice Ripley), who were part of a travelling vaudeville act in the nineteen-thirties, is the basis of this new musical conceived, directed, and choreographed by Robert Longbottom, with music by Henry Krieger ("Dreamgirls") and a book and lyrics by Bill Russell. In previews. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Three-for-All—The Spanish troupe Tricicle (Joan Gracia, Paco Mir, and Carles Sans), which specializes in physical comedy, brings its latest production to the Union Square Theatre. In previews through Oct. 4. Opens Oct. 5 at 7. (100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Triumph of Love—Susan Egan, F. Murray Abraham, Betty Buckley, and Nancy Opel lead the cast of this musical version of the 1732 comedy by Pierre Carlet de Marivaux. With music by Jeffrey Stock and lyrics by Susan Birkenhead. Michael Mayer is the director. In previews. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)



Maripat Donovan, in "Late Nite Catechism," at St. Luke's Church.

OPENED RECENTLY

Always . . . Patsy Cline—Not quite a revue, not quite a play, this spirited and Nashville-slick celebration of the late, great country singer is, rather, a streamlined song-delivery device: Tori Lynn Palazola, who plays Cline, sings twenty-one songs in a mere two hours. The show is based on Cline's relationship with a fan in Houston, played with large-hearted gusto by Margo Martindale. Palazola doesn't sound exactly like Patsy, but she's good at doing Patsy, and more than good when it comes to the slower numbers. The unsung, as it were, heroes of the production are the six members of the backup band, titans of twang all. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Annie—Can the powerhouse waif find another bonanza in this twentieth-anniversary revival of her Broadway musical? Guess not. With eight-year-old Brittny Kissinger wearing the red fright wig, anything once seemed possible, but the show closes Oct. 19. Directed by Martin Charnin. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

As Bees in Honey Drown—In Douglas Carter Beane's comic indictment of America's obsession with fame, J. Smith-Cameron is hilarious as a cultural arbiter whose fabricated personality is, as an adoring Saks salesman (the delightful T. Scott Cunningham) puts it, "a mixture of every woman I've ever loved in a movie." The script, which has been given a vivid production by the Drama Dept., is a gleeful bon mot-filled éclair whose satirical power sours only when, every once in a while, it takes itself too seriously. With Bo Foxworth as the young novelist who falls under Smith-Cameron's spell. Mark Brokaw directed. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

Atwater: Fixin' to Die—George Furth directs a one-man portrait of the late Republican National Committee chairman and controversial spin doctor Lee Atwater. Written by Robert Myers and starring Bruce McIntosh, who originated the role in 1992, in Los Angeles. (28th Street Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 591-0019.)

Barrymore—Christopher Plummer's rich, unmiked voice hits every note of sarcasm and self-loathing in William Luce's rambunctious script as he perfectly captures the grief behind the old ham's gallant frivolity. Well directed by Gene Saks. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes Oct. 19.)

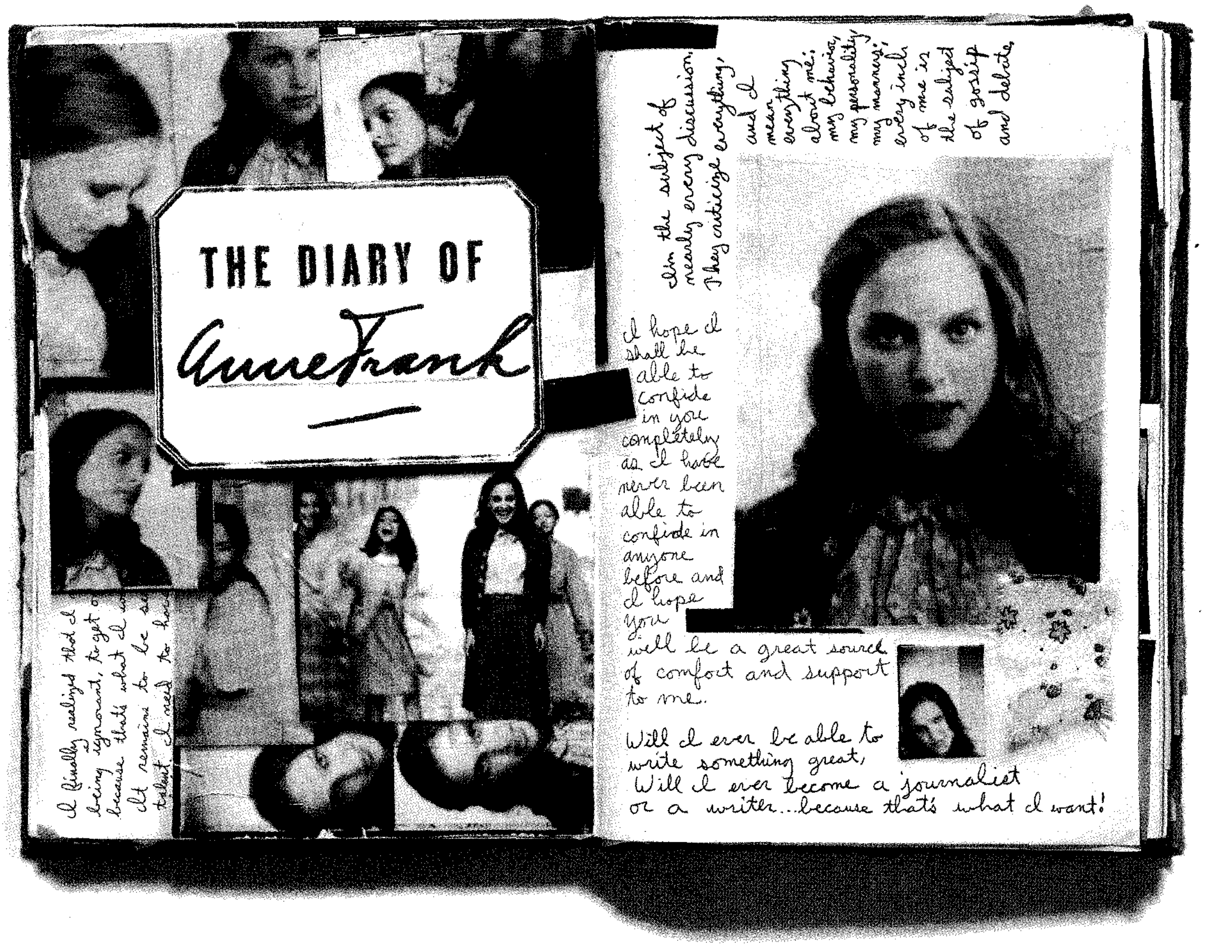
Bermuda Avenue Triangle—In this silly farce, a sexy gambler on the skids (Joseph Bologna) returns the zing to the lives of two elderly women, a Jew (Renée Taylor) and a Catholic (Nanette Fabray), whose sullen daughters have put them out to pasture in a Las Vegas retirement home. Bologna and Taylor's script traffics in the kind of cookie-cutter stereotypes that rate high on the matinée-crowd yuk-o-meter. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Closes Oct. 12.)

Caught in the Act—The Threshold Theatre's festival of international one-acts, by playwrights both well known (Günter Grass, Arthur Schnitzler, Fernando Arrabal, Tristan Tzara) and obscure, directed by, among others, Michael Rupert, Paul Lazar, and Mitchell Greenberg. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. Closes Oct. 5.)

Chicago City Limits—The improv company presents its latest revue, "@Chicago City Limits.comedy." (Chicago City Limits Theatre, First Ave. at 61st St. 888-5233.)

Down Under Darling—John Astor-Kaye's comedy is set in 1821 aboard a coed Australian pirate ship full of talented cultural outcasts, whose mission it is to battle tyranny and bad taste. With music by Donald Arrington. Mr. Astor-Kaye directed. (Wings Theatre, 154 Christopher St. 627-2961. Closes Oct. 11.)

ROBERT DEMICHELL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I finally realized that I
being ignorant, to get
because that's what I
It remains to be
talent. I need to

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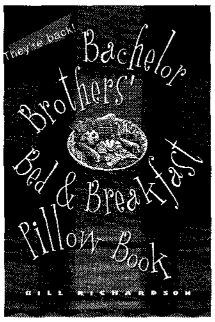

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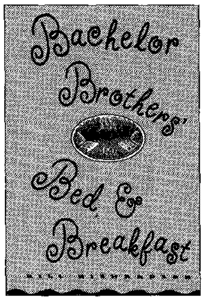

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Forever Tango—This stepchild of Vegas and Buenos Aires gets everything right, from the basic ingredients (sex, pomade) to the big emotions (e.g., the weltschmerz of the bandonion players). One after another, the acrobatic couples flaunt their scissor steps with lubricious joy. But the real treat is the character dancing: it's a big surprise to encounter so many styles—suave, measured, sleazy, torrid, muscular, slapstick—and such a variety of song-length minidramas. Created and directed by Luis Bravo. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Freak—A one-man work in progress from John Leguizamo ("Mambo Mouth," "Spic-O-Rama"). (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

Glorious—The British comedian Eddie Izzard returns to P.S. 122 with a new show. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Closes Oct. 11.)

Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde—Writer-director Moisés Kaufman renders the playwright's trials from edited transcripts, interposing passages from letters, Wilde's writings, and other people's memoirs and commentaries. The result, thanks to Kaufman's clever (if occasionally self-indulgent) direction and a strong, versatile cast—especially Michael Emerson, in the title role—is powerful and surprisingly theatrical. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Hard Times—A stage adaptation of Dickens's novel by Stephen Jeffreys is the season opener for the Pearl Theatre Company. (80 St. Marks Pl. 598-9802. Closes Oct. 5.)

How I Learned to Drive—Paula Vogel's memory play, about a young woman (Jayne Atkinson) who comes of age too quickly under the tutelage of her pedophile uncle (Bruce Davison), is a clear-eyed marvel, and the Vineyard Theatre has given it a beautifully spare and lucid production. With insight and humor, Vogel opens up a subject previously narrowed by fury, voyeurism, and melodrama. Mark Brokaw directed. Molly Ringwald takes over for Ms. Atkinson on Oct. 7. (Century, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Performances of Ibsen's "Hedda Gabler" run in repertory with the company's staging of Tom Stoppard's 1984 farce, "Rough Crossing" (which features a talented cast and original music by Ellen Mandel). (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Jekyll & Hyde—Enjoyable bombast, loosely based on the Robert Louis Stevenson novel. With music by Frank Wildhorn, lyrics and a book by Leslie Bricusse, and solid direction by Robin Phillips. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/12/97.) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

John: His Story—A drama based on the fourth of the Gospels, staged by Houston's A.D. Players. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Closes Oct. 5.)

The Last Night of Ballyhoo—In this romantic comedy of manners, set in Atlanta in 1939, Alfred Uhry stays true to a Southern sense of propriety: he takes on an unsavory topic (anti-Semitism among the Jewish upper crust) without dwelling on it long enough to offend anyone, and, like a practiced host, he shows you a good time without taxing you. Ron Lagomarsino directed. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

Late Nite Catechism—Maripat Donovan offers a commandingly funny performance as the lone nun in charge of an adult catechism class, and the audience brings as much to the performance as the script does. (St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

The Life—This new musical, about the oldest profession in Times Square (before it became known as the new Times Square) and the men who profit from its practitioners, is a cynical, poisonous concoction, featuring phony funk, fake blues, overcooked pop, and a cartoonish, insulting book. The cast includes some good singers, notably Lillias White and Pamela Isaacs. (5/12/97) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Mere Mortals—David Ives, who created the wonderful "All in the Timing," has lately changed his tune to "All in the Recycling": only two of the six short plays here are new. They are, however, Ives at his clever best. "Time Flies" is about the short life of two mayflies—only one day to grow up and get it on before going to the great beyond—and "Dr. Fritz; or, The Forces of Light" is a piece of insanity set somewhere south of the border. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Misalliance—Shaw's 1910 comedy, set in the country house of an English underwear magnate, is subtitled "A Debate in One Sitting," and it rounds up the usual suspects: the bourgeoisie versus the aristocracy, the maddening institution of marriage, and the possibly mad institution of the family. It's a rather bossy piece of work—a comedic tract more than a comedy—and it clocks in at a derrière-numbing three hours. Nevertheless, it has much to recommend it: namely, the glimmer in Shaw's cold eye, Derek McLane's splendid set, and a superb ensemble, led by the warm and magnetic Brian Murray and featuring Patricia Conolly, Remak Ramsay, Zak Orth, and Elizabeth Marvel. David Warren directed. (9/8/97) (Laura Pels, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes Oct. 19.)

Plunge—A new comedy by Christopher Kyle, about four college friends whose country reunion takes an unconvivial turn, is the season's first offering from Playwrights Horizons. Ron Lagomarsino is the director. (416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Oct. 12.)

1776—One of the charms of Sherman Edwards and Peter Stone's still fresh 1969 musical about the drafting of the Declaration of Independence is that it's free of sentimental throat-clearing about This Great Nation of Ours; it shows our Founding Fathers—J. Adams, B. Franklin, T. Jefferson, et al.—behaving a lot like feuding brothers. Scott Ellis's lean, lively production and the many vivid performances bring the Continental Congressmen's personalities and ideas into high relief, and the result is possibly the most entertaining and the wittiest history lesson you've ever received. Brent Spiner's Adams is dour and flinty, yet extremely sympathetic, and Pat Hingle's Franklin is a puckish Buddha, both lusty and lazy. As Jefferson, Paul Michael Valley doesn't make much of an impression, possibly because this Jefferson is conceived as being a bit thick—a sort of Moron of Monticello, able to get over his writer's block and begin working on the D. of I. only after getting it on with his wife. But it's a forgivable misstep in an otherwise light-footed show. (9/8/97) (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Skyscraper—A romantic comedy set in Chicago, atop an architectural treasure slated for destruction. Written by David Auburn and directed by Michael Rego. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 279-4200. Closes Oct. 5.)

Titanic—Though this musical about history's most tragic maiden voyage contains no small number of historical and theatrical misjudgments, it nevertheless manages to take you very close to the heart of the matter—the enormity of the disaster and its heartbreaking human details—and it qualifies as a genuine addition to American musical theatre. Miraculously, the show steers clear of both the Scylla of camp and the Charybdis of bad taste, and the result is an evening that's both sombre and joyful, grave and entertaining. Richard Jones directed. (5/12/97) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Tracers—A revival of the 1980 memory drama created by John DiFusco and eight Vietnam War veterans, presented by the 29th Street Rep. (212 W. 29th St. 465-0575. Closes Oct. 12.)

LONG RUNS

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO**

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Richard Zoglin, TIME MAGAZINE

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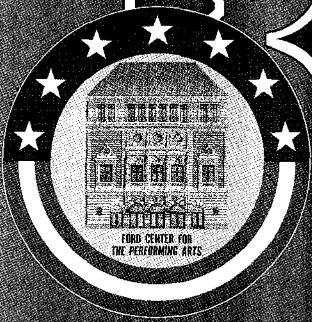
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DANCE

"Tharp!"—Twyla Tharp, the indomitable choreographer with the onomatopoeic name, returns with two programs for her new company. The first features three local premières. The second includes a world première, "Roy's Joys," a pleasurable mix of hidden complexities, with a tight fifty-section structure looped over, around, and through eight musical selections by the Roy of the title, the late expatriate trumpeter Roy Eldridge, who memorialized Harlem in the jazz compositions he wrote in Paris in the early fifties. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Program A: Sept. 30-Oct. 3 at 8 and Oct. 5 at 3. . . . Program B: Oct. 4 at 3 and 8 and Oct. 5 and Oct. 7 at 8. Through Oct. 12.)

"Der Fensterputzer"—Pina Bausch and her transcendently seedy troupe open the Next Wave Festival with an opera-length work, inspired by a three-week stay in Hong Kong, which promises Bausch's signature hodgepodge of scores and effects. Expect to hear Chinese popular songs, Mexican and Indian drumming, Romanian Gypsy airs, and Dizzy Gillespie tunes; expect to see a window washer (*Fensterputzer* in German) with squeegee, a cascade of bauhinia blossoms, and much else. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100. Oct. 3-4 and Oct. 7 at 7:30—note early performance time—and Oct. 5 at 3. Through Oct. 11.)

Dancemakers—The Toronto-based company, in a full-length work, "Les Arbres d'Or," by Serge Bennathan. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Sept. 30-Oct. 3 at 8; Oct. 4 at 2 and 8; and Oct. 5 at 2 and 7:30.)

"Riverdance"—The dancing Irish (eighty strong) bring their high-octane jigs, reels, and hornpipes to the home of the kick line. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Sept. 30-Oct. 3 and Oct. 7 at 8, and Oct. 4-5 at 2 and 8. Through Oct. 12.)

"Study for a Resurrection"—Terry Creach's new full-length piece for his all-male dance company concerns men in isolation: think monks. Working for the first time without his longtime partner, Stephen Koester, he found his collaboration with the dancers deepening: "In the old days I'd tell the dancers what to do," he says. "Now they contribute to the central material, and I just take what they've done and play." That is, as much as one *can* play to the hushed tones of medieval music performed by the all-male a-cappella sextet Lionheart. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Oct. 2-5 at 8:30.)

"Stars of the Kirov Ballet"—Yulia Makhalina, Farukh Ruzimatov, Zhanna Ayupova, and sixteen other dancers from the St. Petersburg company perform selections from the classical repertory, including the "Black Swan" and "Corsaire" pas de deux and "Arlequinada." (Lehman College Concert Hall, the Bronx. 718-960-8833. Oct. 5 at 3.)

Nrityagram Dance Ensemble of India—Eleven dancers who live and study under dance gurus in a community in Bangalore perform in orissa, kathak, and mohiniattam styles. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Oct. 4 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Andrew Cyrille Trio—Cyrille can play the drums inside, outside, and upside down; there isn't a rhythm or a formal ploy that the man hasn't mastered. His lifetime's worth of knowledge—picked up on dates with everyone from Coleman Hawkins and Mary Lou Williams to Cecil Taylor and Muhal Richard Abrams—has solidified into a style that honors inclusiveness above all else. His trio includes guitarist Alex Pascal and bassist Lisle Atkinson. (Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9491. Oct. 3 at 5:30.)

Alasdair Fraser and Skyedance—Celtic and world music from Scotland. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Oct. 5 at 7.)

Foo Fighters—Two albums and five years after he became a public figure as the drummer for Nirvana, Dave Grohl—who now sings, plays guitar, and wears Prada—has finally proved himself a legitimate (if unremarkable) rock songwriter. Unfortunately, he seems to have a diplomacy problem: the Foo Fighters' guitarist (and a minor punk celebrity), Pat Smear, whose tendency to perform in brightly colored dresses was about the only thing that made the band unique, just quit. The opening group is Talk Show, an eminently terrible post-grunge outfit featuring the former members of Stone Temple Pilots minus that group's lead singer, the always interesting, frequently-in-rehab Scott Weiland. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Oct. 5 at 7:30.)

Steve Winwood—Although his last decade has been lackluster, this great and instantly identifiable singer (and killer keyboardist) is a certifiable rock-and-roll original. Live, he's a movable hall-of-fame act. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Oct. 7 at 8.)

Oasis—With the possible exception of the World Cup, there's little in England that generates more maniacal enthusiasm than an appearance by this oddly charismatic quintet from working-class Manchester. Maybe the Brits love Oasis because it's a powerful distillation of everything British, from Noel Gallagher's retrograde songwriting to the band's antic hooliganism. The boys are in top form on their new album, "Be Here Now," which, like its predecessors, is huge in England but not (yet) over here. Unless Noel and brother Liam get into another fistfight, expect a comically impassive, nothing-but-the-facts show that will only underline the painful truth—that Oasis is the best straight-ahead, no-frills rock band around. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. Oct. 7-8 at 8.)

FRANÇOISE ROUSSET

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Singer and bandleader **ALEX DONNER** is at work in the Oak Room through Oct. 4. Dining.

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—**PAT MARTINO** (Oct. 1-4) has won the admiration of three generations of jazz fretmen. Unlike so many guitar manglers, he knows how to transform knowledge, technique, and ideas into genuine music. Oct. 5: The **WALTER BISHOP, JR.,** trio. Oct. 7-8: Singer Roseanna Vitro, in a tribute to Ray Charles. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Oct. 5: **IVAN LINS** is enormously popular in his native Brazil. He's failed to cross over onto the American charts, but the fact that he remains uncorrupted by success here is a blessing for fans of his hip, intelligent songwriting. His music is a feast of jazzy salsa grooves and velvety Portuguese melodies. Starting Oct. 7: The **HORACE SILVER** quintet and the **GENE HARRIS** quartet. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The indelible **BARBARA COOK**, partnered by pianist Wally Harper, holds forth through Oct. 11, with songs from musicals directed by Hal Prince. On Mondays, **WOODY ALLEN** plays with the **EDDY DAVIS NEW ORLEANS JAZZ BAND**. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, pianist **PETER MINTUN** presides at the piano through Oct. 11.

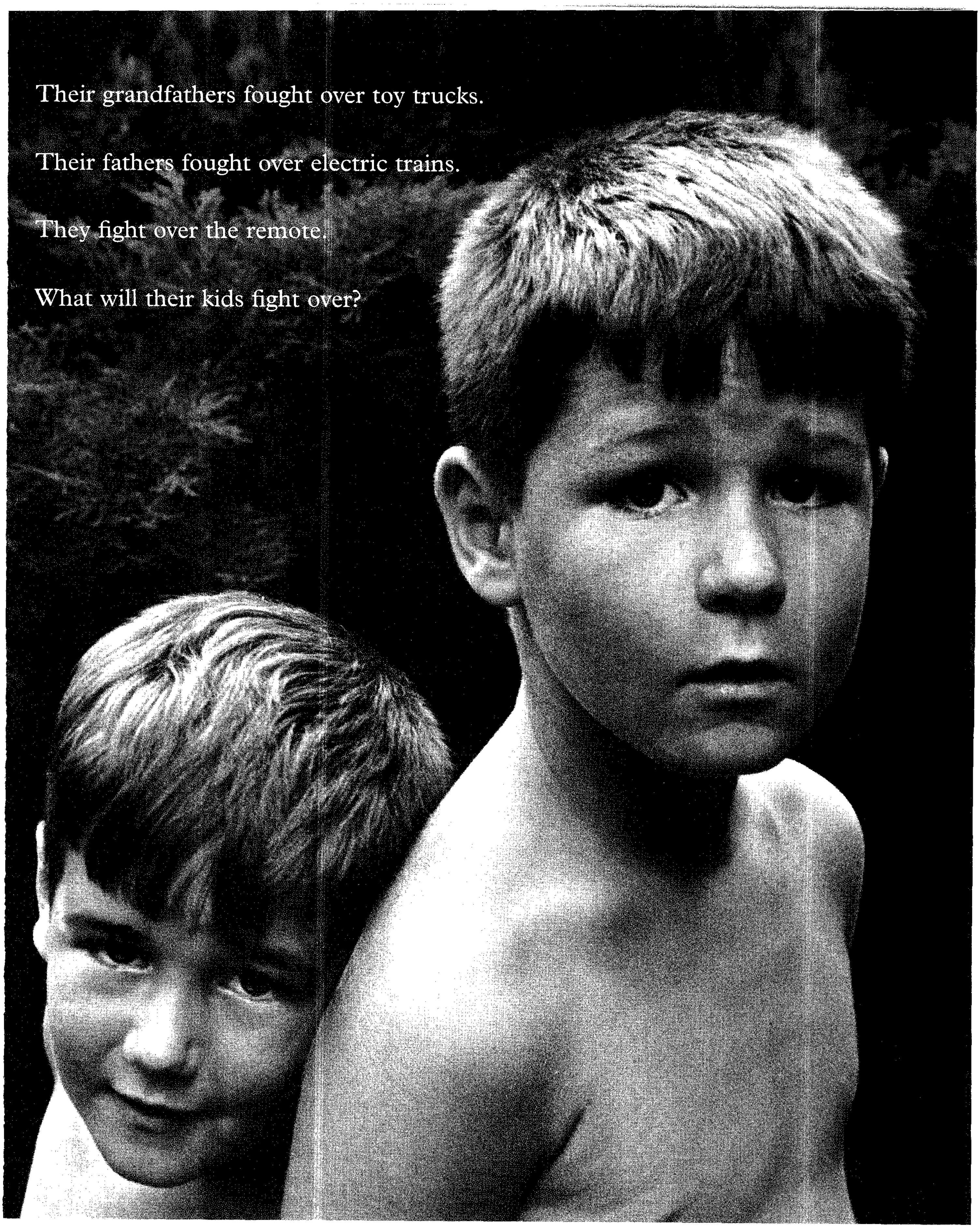
Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Old avant-gardists never die—and if they're lucky, like **ARCHIE SHEPP** (through Oct. 5), they find a graceful rapprochement between the extravagance of youth and the wisdom of maturity. Even during his most rebellious period, in the sixties, this tenor saxophonist with the full-bodied tone never fully broke with the family: his playing often explicitly honored patriarchs Ben Webster and Coleman Hawkins. Today his technique can sometimes lag behind his enthusiasm, but the rejuvenating spirit of the blues buoys his playing and singing. From Oct. 7: The **GONZALO RUBALCABA** trio. Mondays belong to electric-guitar pioneer **LES PAUL**. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass figurine lamps. Through Oct. 4: **STEVE KUHN**, a marvellous pianist who finds new vistas in old standards, backed up by a first-rate rhythm section: bassist **DAVID FINCK** and drummer **BILLY DRUMMOND**.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—Way up on the sixty-fifth floor, the genial, deep-voiced **AMANDA MC BROOM** is in through Oct. 11, with her musical director Joel Silberman at the piano. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Sean Mahony and Hilary Kole. Closed Mondays.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night. The **MYRON WALDEN** trio is in on Oct. 2. **JONNY KING** (Oct. 3-4) plays smart piano, drawing on a host of great models as he firms up his own increasingly authoritative voice. His solid quartet features the ever-dependable altoist **STEVE WILSON**. Stocked to the gills with exciting players, the **JASON LINDNER BIG BAND** holds court every Monday.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through Oct. 5: Pianists don't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come any more swinging than **RAY BRYANT:** imagine Oscar Peterson's technique and Erroll Garner's buoyancy mated with an authentic feel for the blues. Pianist **JUNIOR MANCE** fills in for Bryant on Oct. 2. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Pianist **MARCUS ROBERTS,** in through Oct. 5, always has one foot in the past: James P. Johnson, Thelonious Monk, Gershwin, Ellington—no early master escapes his interest. "Blues for the New Millennium," his début recording as a big-band leader, is just as drunk on history as his earlier projects were. Ellington looms largest, but all the prime influences cast big shadows. For this engagement, Roberts has put together a twelve-piece ensemble stocked with such eager beavers as altoist Sherman Irby, trumpeter Marcus Printup, and trombonist Ronald Westray. Pastiche has its place (as Mingus certainly proved), and Roberts has a sure hand with reassembly. Be warned though: you may be hungry for the real stuff half an hour after the performance. From Oct. 7: The **CHARLES MC PHERSON** quartet. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—Through Oct. 4: Canadian expatriate pianist **RENEE ROSNES** has steadily evolved into a mainstream marvel whose taste and touch set her apart; bassist **TODD COOLMAN** lends her a hand. The **CHRIS ANDERSON/RONI BEN-HUR** trio is in on Oct. 5. With little more than a handful of recordings and surprisingly few appearances over the course of a forty-year career, pianist Anderson safely qualifies as a legend. His lyrical bop rings with eccentricity and experience, and it has the cleansing power of authenticity. For much of the nineties, he has teamed up, as he does here, with Israeli guitarist Ben-Hur.

ROCK, ETC.

Arlene Grocery, 95 Stanton St., between Ludlow and Orchard Sts. (358-1633)—A narrow, dimly lit renovated bodega that's the perfect generic environment for three to five unknown bands each night trying to escape obscurity.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—**SUSAN MC KEOWN AND THE CHANTING HOUSE** (Oct. 2) play fine Celtic pop. Oct. 3: Legendary a-cappella gospel group the **FAIRFIELD FOUR.**

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—Raised on an ashram and world-weary beyond her twenty years, **LAUREN HOFFMAN** (Oct. 4) is preternaturally talented. Her latest album, "Megiddo," shifts from chilling ballad to blackboard-scratching rock with emotionally draining assurance.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Oct. 3-4: **A TRIBUTE TO THE 20TH CENTURY BOY: MARC BOLAN AND T. REX.** The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—Oct. 3: **FROM GOOD HOMES.** The nineties have been rough on **BILLY BRAGG** (Oct. 4) but the blue-collar bard from Barking, East London, remains a commanding onstage presence; his droll banter and heartfelt, often hilarious material prove that you can still win a few battles even after losing the war. Oct. 6: Smart, Police-inflected rock with the **SAMPLES.** Oct. 7-8: The music industry, in its endless search for galvanizing new genres, likes to spew out clever new terms, which sometimes even enter the language: e.g., disco, grunge. With a gift for high-lonesome, back-porchy tunes and a cautious respect for indie-rock iconography (flannel shirts, jeans, greasy hair), **SON VOLT** (along with Wilco, the Old 97's, and a few others) has become the leader of a movement that hipsters are beginning to call "y'alternative." The word is great; Son Volt's music leaves something to be desired. With the quirky old-style New Wave of **APPLES IN STEREO** (on Oct. 7) and the first-rate garage rock of **BUICK MC KANE,** featuring y'alternative guitar hero **ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO** (on Oct. 8).

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—In 1986, **SUZANNE VEGA** (Oct. 2-5) was probably the first singer to commercially jump-start what is frequently described as the second coming of folk. In recent years she's parted company with her beret-clad roots and released a series of increasingly complex, sonically provocative, and often astoundingly good (if emotionally detached) records. (Partial credit goes to her husband, Crowded House producer Mitchell Froom.) In concert, she's a pro who always delivers.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—A medium-sized, brick-walled haven of a back room where, no matter who's onstage, the listening is a pleasure. Oct. 2: Acoustic country blues from newcomer **KELLY JOE PHELPS** and, on a separate bill, West Coast alternarock with **FUCK.** Oct. 3: A great chance to see the much-in-demand downtown guitarist **GARY LUCAS.** Oct. 5: The local power pop of **44.** Oct. 7: Come into the roadhouse with wildman guitarist **BILL KIRCHEN.**

"Jasper and Lois—Edisto, S.C." (1962), by Robert Rauschenberg, on view at Pace Wildenstein MacGill, in conjunction with the Guggenheim retrospective.

© ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG, COURTESY PACEWILDENSTEINMACGILL, NY

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Dedicated to calypso, reggae, and the bossa nova. Oct. 6: **"VOCAL SAMPLING,"** an evening of a-cappella jams from Cuba. Dining.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Although they've been eclipsed on the charts by the snivelling noise of Matchbox 20, indications are that **THIRD EYE BLIND** (Oct. 2), a four-piece rock band from San Francisco, is here to stay. "Semi-Charmed Life," the group's Elektra début, is full of earnest modern rock with an impressive, radio-friendly sheen. With the excellent, underrated, Waitresses-flavored pop of the **DAMBUILDERS.**

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Oct. 1: "Night on the Ganges," a multimedia evening of music, dance, film, and incense with world-music exponent **JAI UTTAL** and his **PAGAN LOVE ORCHESTRA.** Oct. 2: Belfast punk heroes **STIFF LITTLE FINGERS** and Boston hardcore heroes **GANG GREEN.** Oct. 3: Aggressive ska with **LESS THAN JAKE.** Oct. 4: **MORRIS DAY AND THE TIME.** The zoot-suited Lothario and his ferociously funky cohorts are still at it. "Jungle Love," baby.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Oct. 3: **DREAD ZEPPELIN** plays occasionally brilliant reggae covers of Led Zep tunes. Oct. 6: The house band of your dreams, the **BROOKLYN FUNK ESSENTIALS** explode the dictionary of funk with fearsome authority.

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—While nearly everyone acknowledges Picasso as the century's most important painter, we tend to forget how completely he transformed the graphic arts. "Picasso: The Engraver" is an excellent survey of his printmaking career, though the title is a bit misleading—to be accurate it would have to be "Picasso: The Engraver, Etcher, Drypointist, Lithographer, Woodcutter, Monotyper, and Aquatintist," for he left his mark on virtually every print medium. The show begins with some boldly composed woodcuts dating from the artist's early youth, including one of a toreador which shimmers with vitality. "Minotaur with a Dagger" (1933) is a good example of a Picasso innovation: the fine, spidery lines of the etching were printed on a sheet of paper painted over in patches of bright color. Most of the prints come from the Musée Picasso, in Paris; they are accompanied by paintings, drawings, and collages on related subjects from the Met's own collection. Through Dec. 21. . . . ¶ "Wordrobe," an exhibition at the Costume Institute, explores the use of words, letters, and numbers in fashion, with examples ranging from love notes that fit inside corset stays to an Evans and Wong slip in black Ultrasuede, liberally adorned with quotations from Emily Post's "Do's and Don'ts for the Debutante." Through Nov. 23. . . . ¶ "Georgia O'Keeffe: A Portrait by Alfred Stieglitz." Through Oct. 5. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"From Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec to Andy Warhol: Exploring Techniques." The museum has arranged selections from its permanent collection (Gauguin, Kollwitz, Munch, Elizabeth Murray, et al.) to illustrate the variety of approaches to four mediums: woodcut, etching, lithograph, and silk screen. Through Feb. 8. . . . ¶ "Toward the New Museum of Modern Art: Sketchbooks by Ten Architects." Through Oct. 7. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective" offers more than four hundred pieces from nearly half a century of work. At both Guggenheim

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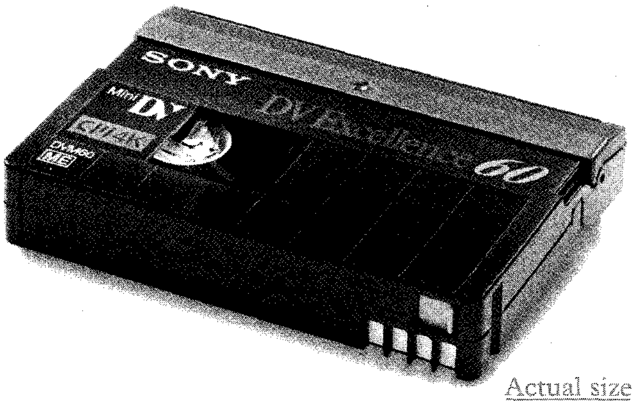

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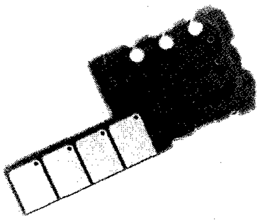

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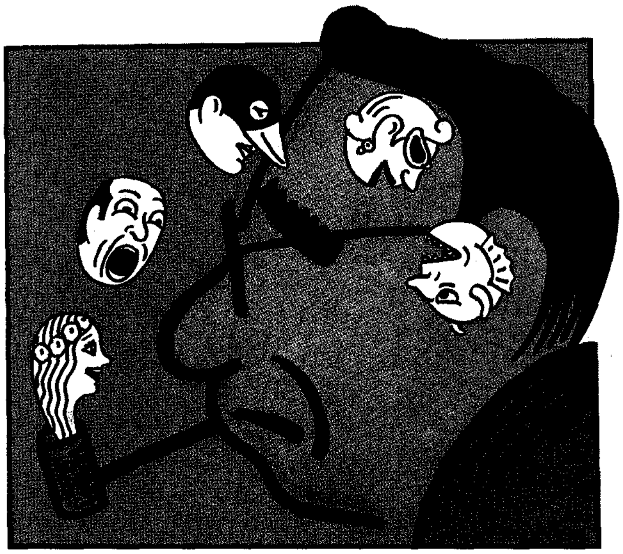
venues, through Jan. 7. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Guggenheim Museum SoHo, 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (423-3500)—The museum's Rauschenberg retrospective continues here; the Ace Gallery (275 Hudson St.; 255-5599) has opened a third front in the exhibition and, for the duration of the show, adheres to the schedule of the museum's downtown branch (see also Uptown Galleries Short List and Photography). (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—"Views from Abroad 3: American Realities." In this series, European curators are asked to rifle through the Whitney's vaults to present their vision of American art. This installment was curated by Nicholas Serota and Sandy Nairne, of the Tate Gallery, in London. Through Oct. 5. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St. (744-8181)—"Power and Virtue: The Horse in Chinese Art" examines more than two millennia's worth of equine representations (individualized imperial steeds as well as more generalized symbols of temporal and spiritual power), in hand scrolls, album leaves, and sculptures. Through Dec. 13. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8; Sundays, 1 to 5.)



Self-portrait by Seymour Chwast (School of Visual Arts).

Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912)—"1962/63, 1970, 1996" focusses on three decisive moments in the career of the minimalist sculptor Dan Flavin (1933-96). The "icons" of the early sixties—a series of eight painted, wall-mounted boxes to which he affixed fluorescent and incandescent light fixtures in various shapes and colors—represent his first experiments with light as a medium for sculpture; they have an amusingly goofy quality that belies the radical nature of his gesture. He continued to push the implications of that gesture with a pivotal piece he titled "The Diagonal of May 23, 1963 (to Constantin Brancusi)," consisting of nothing more than a single diagonally mounted fluorescent fixture. An untitled installation in blue and red fluorescent light, from 1970, is one of his largest and most elaborate projects: maximalist minimalism. Finally, from the year of his death, there are the site-specific pieces he created for the stairwells of Dia. (Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (423-3200)—"Camille Pissarro in the Caribbean, 1850-55," a collection of undistinguished early works by an artist who became a leader of the French Impressionist school. The drawings and oil sketches were recently discovered at Olana, the landscape painter Frederic Edwin Church's fairy castle in upstate New York, where they landed as a result of a delightful art-historical tangle. Pissarro was born on St. Thomas, in the Virgin Islands, of Portuguese Jewish ancestry. While he was still in his teens and just learning to draw, he befriended an itinerant Danish artist named Fritz Melbye; in time the two ran off to Caracas together to paint. Much later, after Pissarro had left for Paris and fame, Melbye met Church in New York. When the Dane headed off for China, where he promptly died, Church inherited boxes of sketches of island life by the forgotten Melbye and the very much remembered Pissarro. Unfortunately, little of the work is signed, and it's impossible to sort out who did what, but it's a fascinating mess. Through Nov. 16. (Open Sundays through Thursdays, 11 to 5:45, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (534-1672)—"Beyond the Grave: Cultures of Queens Cemeteries" surveys graveyard aesthetics, tombstone memorials, ethnic funeral traditions, and graveside visitation habits in the many cemeteries of Queens. Through March 8. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (369-4880)—"The Tenth Street Studio Building: Artist Entrepreneurs from the Hudson River School to the American Impressionists," an entertaining exhibition reconstructing the academic art scene in later-nineteenth-century New York. The exotic clutter of William Merritt Chase's studio has been reproduced in the Academy's round room, with Persian rugs and heavy pewter and copper objects strewn amid potted palms. A fine South American landscape by Frederic Edwin Church stands on an easel swathed with draperies and flanked by potted plants. Some of the work is awful, but a lot of it is great fun: "The Bear Dance," for example, by William Holbrook Beard, is just that, a big hoedown in the forest with dozens of huggly-wuggly dancing bears. Through Nov. 16. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5, and Friday evenings until 10.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6; some Chelsea galleries are closed Tuesdays and open Sundays.)

Philip Guston (1913-80)—Bold gouache illustrations of soldiers in training and of the civilian war effort, commissioned by *Fortune* in 1943, and a suite of lithographs in the artist's so-called cartoon style from 1980, the year of his death. The two groups of work on display here make an interesting juxtaposition: as patriotic as the early drawings are, they plainly carry the seeds of Guston's bitter denunciations of bigotry and violence in the cartoon period. Through Oct. 4. (McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 688-5951.)

Duncan Hannah—Recollections of a drab childhood in England during the thirties, by a painter from Minnesota who was born in 1952. The various scenes, all reminiscent of British prewar cinema, are rendered in washed-out color: little girls in school uniforms and knee socks playing blindman's buff, a boy in knickers lurking near a ditch, a young woman

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in a hideous frock looking lost in Soho. The artist's last exhibition, which demonstrated an unwholesome interest in the flesh of children, was even stranger; this one has a bland, empty feel that prevents the eccentricity from working. Through Oct. 18. (De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050.)

Roberto Juarez—A remarkable series of paintings which constitutes a visual equivalent of Joycean stream of consciousness, suggesting a stroll through a Rome in which classical sculpture, foliage, scraps of pavement, and tomatoes piled high in a vegetable stall have all been jumbled together, promiscuously and suggestively. Through Oct. 4. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454.)

Cynthia Knott—A ravishing suite of paintings in the form of a quasi-mystical exploration of the line where sea meets sky. Her incandescent visions of the Long Island shoreline are almost uninflected except for the occasional meteorological phenomenon, but they seem to contain boundless space for meditation. Through Oct. 4. (DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111.)

Sean Scully—This vital, prolific artist has two shows up. The more interesting one—at **GALERIE LELONG** (20 W. 57th St., 315-0470), through Nov. 1—presents a number of what Scully calls floating paintings: perpendicularly protruding panels that bear his signature stripes. It also includes two suites of photographs, taken in Morocco and the Outer Hebrides, of "found" stripes, on corrugated-tin shacks and painted walls. At **BOONE** (745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St., 752-2929), through Oct. 25, several Large, Important canvases lie in wait for museum curators, but they lack the energy of the smaller work at Lelong.

"Invited"—Paris Murray and Diane Waldman have curated a show of work by seven young women, some of it very strong: "Dust," a dust bunny nearly six feet tall, by sculptor Melissa McGill, who goes around emptying her friends' vacuum cleaners (it's cheaper than marble); witty, wall-mounted brassieres made of waxed paper, Saran Wrap, and tape, by Julie Allen; a series of photographs of landscapes, some postcard-pretty (mountains, beaches), some strange (statues of dinosaurs at a Southern California truck stop), all shot between the legs of the photographer, Caryl Davis; and a series of twisted, seductive Victorian interiors, exquisitely rendered in black enamel on vinyl, by Cadence Giersbach. Through Oct. 25. (Helman, 20 W. 57th St. 245-2888.)

"The New Objectivity"—Paintings, drawings, watercolors, and prints by Dix, Grosz, Schad, and other Weimar-era artists. Through Nov. 8. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. 245-6734.)

"The Pleasure of Building"—Watercolors, by Andrew Zega and Bernd H. Dams, of châteaus, hermitages, and garden edifices from the early days of Louis XIV. Through Oct. 18. (Didier Aaron, 32 E. 67th St. 988-5248.)

Group Show—Abstract Expressionist paintings from the Parisian squad: Sam Francis, Paul Jenkins, and Georges Mathieu. Through Oct. 25. (Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. 399-5510.)

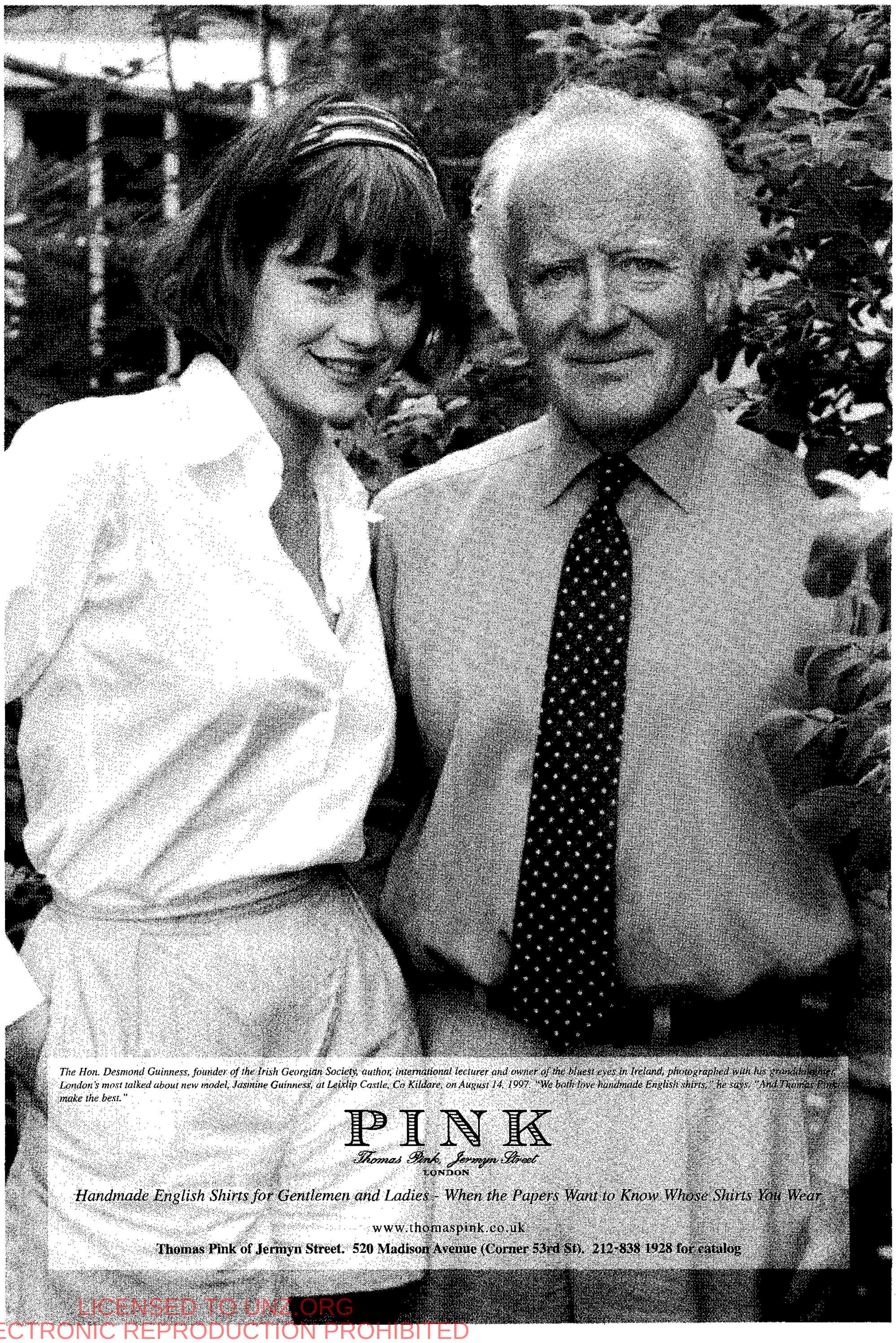
Short List—**MARCEL BROODTHAERS,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160. Open Mondays; through Nov. 1. . . . **JUDY GLANTZMAN,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810. Through Oct. 11. . . . **HAL HIRSHORN,** Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 535-5767. Through Oct. 18. . . . **JAMES MC GARRELL,** Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 644-5665. Through Oct. 14. . . . **ALFONSO OSSORIO** and **BOB THOMPSON,** Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. 247-0082. Both shows through Nov. 8. . . . **TOM OTTERNESS,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900. Open Mondays; through Oct. 25. . . . **ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG,** Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292. Through Oct. 18. . . . **THEODORE ROSZAK** and **FREDERICK J. SYKES,** Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810. Both shows through Nov. 15. . . . **MARY JO VATH,** Winston Wächter, 111 E. 65th St. 327-2526. Through Oct. 18. . . . **WILLIAM WOOD**

ONLY CONNECT

Urban Legends Reference Pages (http://www.snopes.com)—In the wake of the conspiracy theories regarding T.W.A.'s Flight 800, Kurt Vonnegut's putative commencement address, and tales of the kidney snatchers of New Orleans (or was it Las Vegas?), the importance of tracking urban legends can't be overestimated. If the Internet provides a slippery superhighway for all manner of balderdash to wend its away around the country, unfettered by fact-checking, then sites such as this one, maintained by the San Fernando Valley Folklore Society, serve as traffic cops.

Urban legends, those too-ironic-to-be-true, poodle-in-the-microwave-type stories beloved by Thomas Pynchon and David Foster Wallace, are here categorized by color (green identifies a true story, red false, yellow undetermined, and white unverifiable) and subclassified by subject: movies, music, Disney (you never heard of Uncle Walt's "Story of Menstruation"?), and, of course, sex. For those who don't know where to start, the Randomizer calls up legends at random. Tales of the Wooden Spoon includes Internet-disseminated fables ("a man insures his cigars against fire, then tries to collect after smoking them") and a corner called Fractured Facts, which purports to contain every nasty thing ever said about Coca-Cola.

A perusal of Funny Searches, a page full of search requests that led visitors to this site, indicates that human gullibility (or, at least, prankishness) is infinite. While it may seem sad that someone searched for information using the phrase "naked disney," it's heartbreaking to contemplate the state of mind of the person who asked for "pictures of my naked girlfriend." Some things even the Web can't provide.



The Hon. Desmond Guinness, founder of the Irish Georgian Society, author, international lecturer and owner of the bluest eyes in Ireland, photographed with his granddaughter, London's most talked about new model, Jasmine Guinness, at Leixlip Castle, Co Kildare, on August 14, 1997. "We both love handmade English shirts," he says. "And Thomas Pink make the best."

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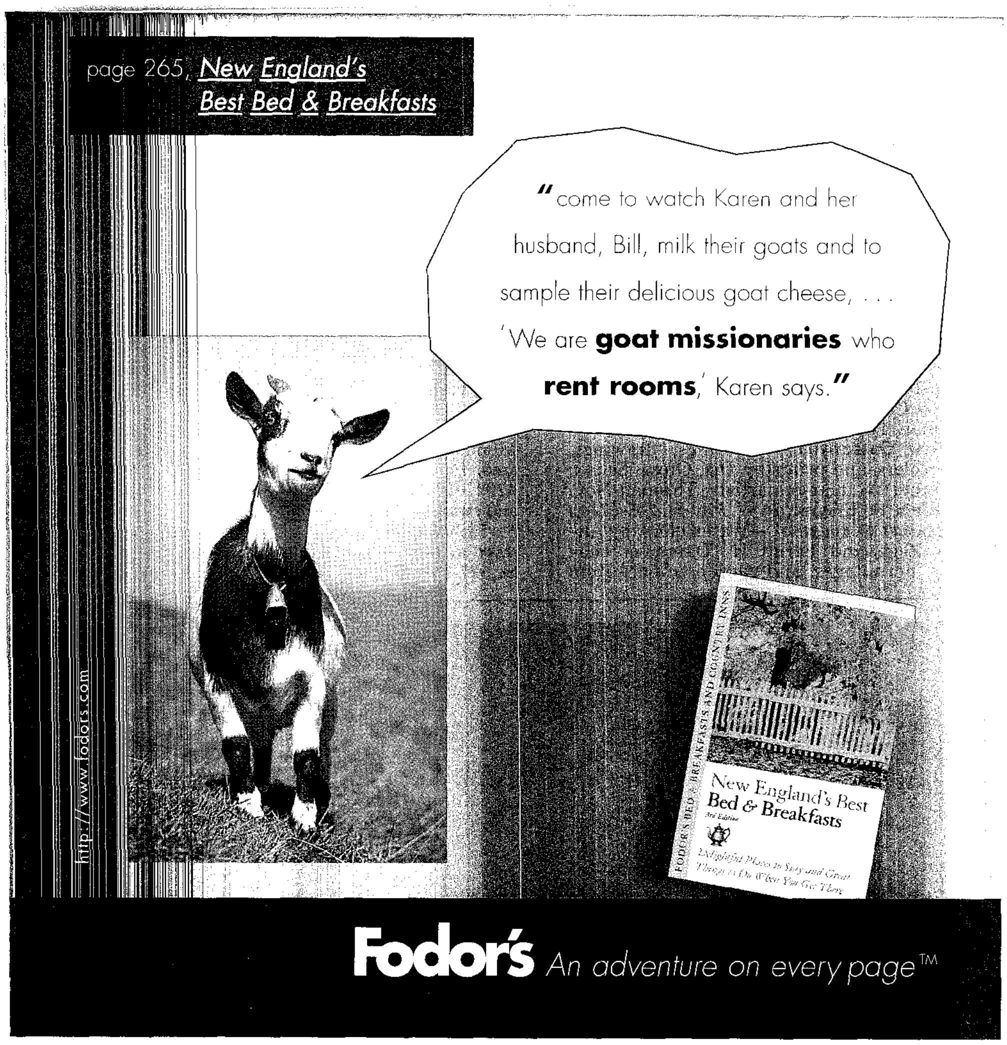
page 265, New England's Best Bed & Breakfasts

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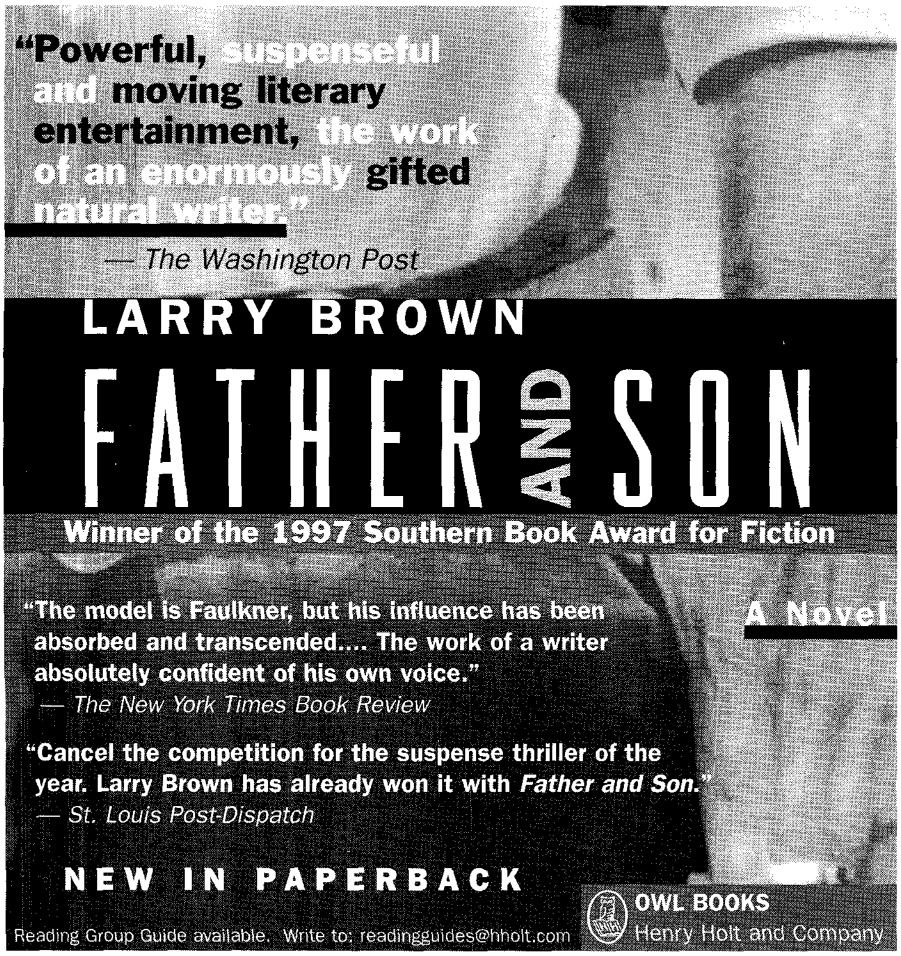
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and **JOE ZUCKER**, Danese, 41 E. 57th St. 223-2227. Both shows through Oct. 18. . . . **JACK YOUNGERMAN**, Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. 397-6780. Through Oct. 25.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

RICHMOND BURTON—Large, colorful paintings from the fun-house branch of abstraction. The paint handling is playfully sloppy, the color combinations create trapdoors of space, and the loopy lines have a foolhardy paisleyness. In general, the canvases have been worked to a level of corner-to-corner trippiness that is nicely consistent with such titles as "Frequent Flyer," "Shivaesque," and "Everything Is Early (For Peter)." Through Oct. 11. (Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. 242-7727.)

KAREN KILIMNIK—In "The Sleeping Beauty" (paintings, drawings, and an installation), the artist treats us once again to her delightfully perverse pastiches of Old Master paintings, fashion advertisements, and society gossip. In one painting, Kate Moss goes Communist; in another, she hangs out with a cow. An undercurrent of aggression subverts the manic prettiness of the images. On Wednesdays and Saturdays at 12:30, the installation acts up: the curtains are drawn, the lights are dimmed, and dry-ice vapor is pumped into the gallery. Through Oct. 25. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121. Open Tuesdays; closed Sundays.)

MARTIN KIPPENBERGER (1953-97)—Working in diverse mediums, the late artist—one of the most influential in Germany—assiduously avoided a signature style, though it could be said that he had a signature sensibility: irreverent, sarcastic, comic, absurdist. This show consists of recent paintings and an installation similar to the aluminum subway entrance that was on view this past summer at Documenta X. The difference: in order to get the piece through the door here, it had to be crushed—an appropriately Kippenbergerian approach to the changed site. Through Oct. 11. (Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 206-7100.)

ROSEMARIE TROCKEL—"Yvonne," a noteworthy installation of recent video work, most of it concerning gender and feminist issues, by the German artist. The installation in the main gallery, featuring rows of ceiling-mounted monitors all running at the same time, is stunning visually, but you have to wonder who will have the stamina to give them the sustained attention they require. Through Oct. 15. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 206-9300.)

GROUP SHOW—The sculptors Magdalena Abakanowicz, Louise Bourgeois, and Sir Anthony Caro present a work apiece in the inaugural show at the Chelsea Marlborough. Through Oct. 25. (211 W. 19th St. 463-8634.)

SHORT LIST—**JENNIFER BARTLETT**, Kempner, 501 W. 23rd St. 206-6872. Through Oct. 19. . . . **DANIELE GALLIANO**, Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. 741-8695. Through Oct. 16. . . . **JUTTA KOETHER**, Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. 727-7366. Through Oct. 18. . . . **ZOE LEONARD**, Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105. Through Oct. 11. . . . **MIKAEL LUNDBERG**, De Folin, 529 W. 20th St. 242-3434. Through Oct. 12. . . . **RUDY ROYVAL**, Kravets/Wehby, 529 W. 21st St. 352-2238. Through Nov. 11.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

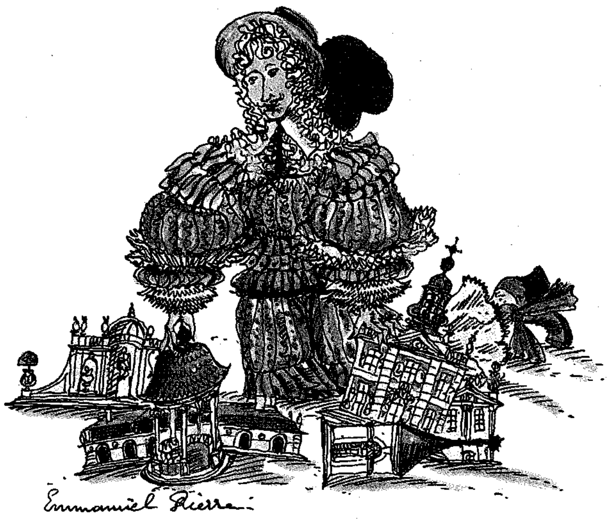
SEYMOUR CHWAST—A retrospective of work by the graphic designer and co-founder of Push Pin Studios, including posters from the sixties ("End Bad Breath") and the eighties ("Nicholas Nickleby") and a recent silk-screen series of Brylcreem men. Through Nov. 8. (School of Visual Arts, 209 E. 23rd St. 592-2144.)

JAMES NARES—New oil paintings. Nares has had a long and varied career in the downtown art world. In the era of the Mudd Club, he played in the No Wave band the Contortions, directed experimental films, and belonged to the artists' collective Colab. More recently he has devoted himself to paintings that consist, usually, of one large, dramatically executed brushstroke. The results are unvaryingly pretty and a little monotonous. Through Oct. 4. (Kasmin, 74 Grand St. 219-3219.)

FRANK WEBSTER—Monochromatic paintings (sky blue, menthol green, cigarette-filter sienna) of tract houses and suburban miscellany (a water tower, a lawn ornament). The paintings have a freehand fat-brush construction that matches the simplicity of the architecture and comments on its shoddiness. Through Oct. 4. (Fotouhi Cramer, 560 Broadway. 431-1304.)

"Project Painting"—An ambitious two-gallery survey of recent tendencies in painting, including examples by a few established artists (Chuck Close, Carroll Dunham) but with a pronounced inclination toward the work of the young and oh so hip. The premise is essentially that painting has been liberated, on the one hand from the stringencies of Greenbergian modernism and on the other from the demands of the postmodern theorizing of the eighties. Pluralism, according to the catalogue text, need no longer be regarded as a sorry intellectual or aesthetic condition. Curious then, that there is such a sameness of look and tone here—almost all the work exhibits characteristics traceable to either biomorphic surrealism or cartoons. That doesn't mean there are no good paintings. Through Oct. 11. (Basilico Fine Arts, 26 Wooster St., 966-1831; and Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St., 965-0753.)

Short List—**JAMES ANGUS,** Gavin Brown's Enterprise, 558 Broome St. 431-1512. Through Nov. 11. . . . **MARKUS BAENZIGER,** Bonakdar, 130 Prince St. 925-8035. Through Oct. 11. . . . **WILLARD BOEPPLE,** Collins, 83 Grand St. 226-1861. Through Oct. 25. . . . **WILLIAM CLUTZ,** Davies, 23 Commerce St. 243-6868. Through Oct. 11. . . . **PAUL FEELEY,** Markey, 55 Vandam St. 627-4446. Through Nov. 1. . . . **ERIC GREEN,** Henoch, 80 Wooster St. 966-6360. Through Oct. 14. . . . **RICHARD JACKSON,** Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074. Through Oct. 18. . . . **RICHARD LONG,** Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. 431-3685. Through Nov. 8. . . . **SENGA NENGUDI,** Erben, 476 Broome St. 966-5283. Through Oct. 11. . . . **NAM JUNE PAIK** and **WILLIAM WEGMAN,** Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. 941-5777. Both shows through Nov. 8. . . . **DEBORAH PASWATERS,** Petronko, 568 Broadway. 334-4020. Through Oct. 11. . . . **LORNA SIMPSON,** Sean Kelly, 43 Mercer St. 343-2405. Through Oct. 25. . . . **RENÉE STOUT,** Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St. 431-4224. Through Oct. 11. . . . **DARREN WATERSTON,** Cowles, 420 West Broadway. 925-3500. Through Oct. 11. . . . **GILLIAN WEARING,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. 966-4480. Through Oct. 25.



"The Pleasure of Building," architectural drawings of grand projects from the era of Louis XIV, at Didier Aaron.

EMMANUEL PIERRE

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Sotheby's—Jurassic junkies are expected to bid on "Sue," the largest and most complete *Tyrannosaurus rex* skeleton ever found. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000. Oct. 4.)

Christie's—An auction of rare books. (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000. Oct. 7.)

Doyle—A sale of furniture, decorative art, and paintings. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730. Oct. 8.)

Swann—An auction of photographs, including a mid-nineteenth-century whole-plate ambrotype of a New York City baseball team (count 'em—nine). (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710. Oct. 7.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Stéphane Couturier / "Éditions Paul-Martial"—"Urban Archeology," an eminently well-observed suite of construction sites in Paris and Berlin. The colorful, highly constructivist compositions have enough satisfying detail to make you wish you'd brought a folding chair. /A recently discovered cache of nineteen-thirties industrial and architectural photographs from the archives of the Paris advertising and graphic-design firm. Through Oct. 18. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220.)

Gregory Crewdson—His beautiful, inexplicable color photographs of still-life tableaux have always had a grisly quality, but this time Crewdson outdoes himself: among the ever-present butterflies, tulips, and miniature houses, he now places clothed casts of his own arms and legs, lying in the dirt and seemingly rotting away. In addition, a captivating new black-and-white series, called "Hover," explores the strange, sometimes otherworldly goings on of an isolated suburban subdivision. Through Oct. 4. (Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. 219-9600.)

Sally Mann—"Recent Landscapes of Georgia and Virginia," the inaugural show at Edwynn Houk's new space. Through Nov. 8. (745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070.)

Michael Martone—A large thirty-year survey that ranges from single gelatin-silver prints to suites of mixed-medium-and-painted-frame assemblages. The straight pictures were published in the photographer's 1973 monograph, "Dark Light"; their grim humor works even better here. Several of the simpler series—"Baroque Cupid," "Life and Death of a Mannequin"—are beautifully imagined, poignant totems of loss. Through Oct. 4. (Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St. 780-0071.)

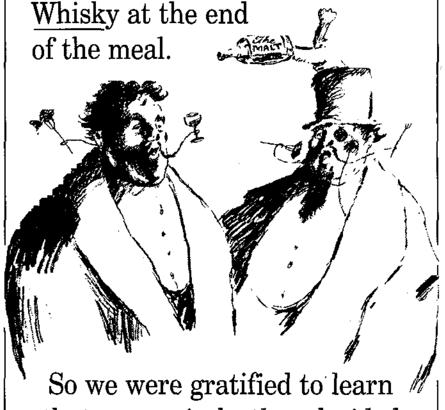
Robert Rauschenberg—A selection of new iris prints of black-and-white photographs from the late forties through the early eighties, in conjunction with the Guggenheim retrospective (see Museums and Libraries). Through Oct. 25. (Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999.)

Aaron Siskind (1903-91)—"The Fragmentation of Language," a well-chosen selection of the artist's wonderful black-and-white semi-abstractions of nature, painted signs, and graffiti. The show includes two landmark photographs of scrambled-letter signs from Kentucky, as well as pictures of ripped posters in North Carolina and Rome, blistered paint in New York, and Abstract Expressionistic brushstrokes in Jalapa, Mexico. Through Oct. 18. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St. 570-1223.) . . . ¶ A small show of similar works by Siskind, including a group of ten images the artist printed as Christmas cards in the forties and fifties. Through Oct. 11. (Wooster Gardens, 558 Broadway. 941-6210.)

Louis Stettner—"New York/Paris, 1950-1997." This veteran black-and-white photographer's instinct for shooting in train stations, in the street, and in cafés is gently reserved but always in tune. Among the fine scenes on view here are a rodeo cowboy and his horse outside Rockefeller Center on a cold morning and a mother and child pulling each other in opposite directions on their way into (we're sure) the Louvre. Through Oct. 18. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766.)

Robert Stivers—Ghostly black-and-white images (a masklike woman's face with hollowed eyes, a crying baby with alien hands) whose theatricality smartly complements their mystery. Through Oct. 11. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.)

Tseng Kwong Chi (1950-90)—"The Gang's All Here." When he wasn't travelling the globe



WE READ BUBBLE-EYED

in the London Standard the account of two Frenchmen who sat down to a gargantuan feast in La Rochelle's Rabelais Restaurant.

The fourteen hour, £1,500 meal opened with canapes of Sevruga caviar, foie gras, marinated salmon: progressed into emerald oysters: followed up with raw foie gras marinated in Montrachet: and pursued with a litany of crayfish, truffles, filet de boeuf en croute, salad, cherre, patisserie, sorbets ...

As for refreshment, the tally at the end of the repast was two bottles of 1969 champagne, ten bottles of Montrachet 1982, a Chateau Margaux 1966, and an 1895 Armagnac.

Of course with such a 'Grand Bouffe' behind them, our gourmands could scarcely have hoped to appreciate the sherry-gold finesse of a 25 year-old The Macallan Malt Whisky at the end of the meal.

So we were gratified to learn that, very wisely, they decided to start with it.

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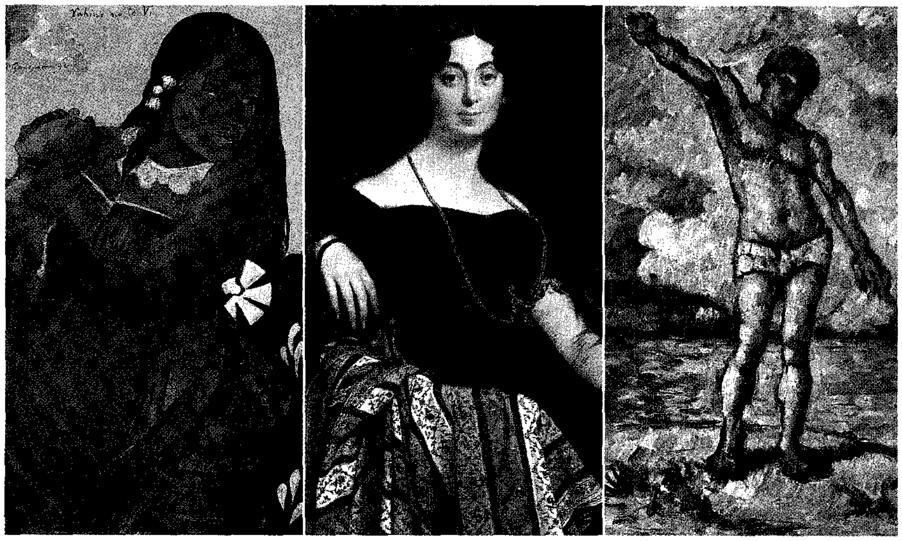
and posing himself in front of tourist sites for his brilliant "Expeditionary Series," Tseng was continually snapping mostly joyful shots of his East Village art-crowd friends. Among the gang—seen at clubs, at museum galas, on the bleak night of Reagan's first inauguration, and in the studio—are Keith Haring, Bill T. Jones, Ann Magnuson, Joey Arias, and John Sex. Through Oct. 11. (Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747.)

International Center of Photography—"Brett Weston in New York," a selection of seventy-five photographs from 1943-45, by an artist better known for his landscapes and nature studies. Through Nov. 30. . . . ¶ "Soul of the Game: Images & Voices of Street Basketball" presents the black-and-white work of sports photographer John Huet. Through Nov. 19. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**JOSEPH BARTSCHERER,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160. Open Mondays; through Nov. 1. . . . **ERICA BAUM,** Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Open Tuesdays, closed Sundays; through Oct. 18. . . . **LORNA BIEBER,** I-20, at 529 W. 20th St. 645-1100. Open Tuesdays; through Oct. 12. . . . **RALPH GIBSON,** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010. Through Nov. 1. . . . **ALLEN GINSBERG,** De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050. Through Oct. 18. . . . **CHIKASHI KASAI,** Nordanstad, 476 Broome St. 274-1508. Through Oct. 11. . . . **KOICHIRO KURITA,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510. Through Oct. 18. . . . **JACQUES LOWE,** Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon; through Oct. 25. . . . **HIROMITSU MORIMOTO,** Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., at 23rd St. 242-7767. Through Oct. 12. . . . **ALEXANDER RODCHENKO,** Schickler, 560 Broadway. 431-6363. Through Oct. 11. . . . **JAN STALLER,** Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. 505-5555. Through Nov. 1. . . . **SENECA RAY STODDARD,** Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Through Nov. 1. . . . **DONALD SULTAN,** Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Through Oct. 11.

(See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum.)

We know what Degas created.
Now, we can see what he collected.



Left to right (all details): Paul Gauguin, *Woman of the Mango (Vahine no te vi)*, 1892, The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Cone Collection, formed by Dr. Claribel Cone and Miss Etta Cone of Baltimore, Maryland; Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Madame Jacques-Louis Leblanc, née Françoise Poncelle (1788–1839)*, 1823, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund, 1918; and Paul Cézanne, *Bather with Outstretched Arms*, ca. 1883, Collection of Jasper Johns.

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OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**MANON,** with Renée Fleming, Marcello Giordani, Michel Sénéchal, Roberto de Candia, John Del Carlo, and Paul Plishka; conducted by Julius Rudel. (Oct. 1 and Oct. 4 at 8.) . . . **ARIADNE AUF NAXOS,** with Deborah Voigt, Natalie Dessay, Susanne Mentzer, Thomas Moser, and Wolfgang Brendel; James Levine. (Oct. 2 at 8:30 and Oct. 6 at 8.) . . . **CARMEN,** with Norah Amsellem, Denyce Graves, Plácido Domingo, and Gino Quilico; Yves Abel. (Oct. 3 at 8.) . . . **TURANDOT,** with Jane Eaglen, Hei-Kyung Hong, Luciano Pavarotti, and Roberto Scandiuzzi; Mr. Levine. (Oct. 4 at 1:30 and Oct. 7 at 7:30.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—**LA TRAVIATA.** (Oct. 1 at 7:30 and Oct. 5 at 1:30.) . . . Rossini's **L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI.** (Oct. 3 at 8 and Oct. 7 at 7:30.) . . . **THE MAGIC FLUTE,** performed in English. (Oct. 4 at 1:30.) . . . Gluck's **IPHIGÉNIE EN TAURIDE.** (Oct. 4 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. . . . **NOTE:** At press time, these performances were threatened by the possibility of a strike. Ticket holders may wish to check with the box office.)

"Dawn of Japan: The Townsend Harris Story"—Seiichi Kotani conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's and a passel of Japanese vocal soloists in an operatic historical pageant with music by Toroku Takagi. Sondheim's "Pacific Overtures" is, of course, the classic musical-theatre treatment of Commodore Perry and the opening of Japan, but New Yorkers might take special pride in the tale of Townsend Harris; before he was stationed as a diplomat in Japan, in the eighteen-fifties, he served as president of New York City's Board of Education and almost single-handedly founded City College. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 1 at 8.)

DiCapo Opera Theatre—Final performances of "Pagliacci." (184 E. 76th St. 288-9438. Oct. 3-4 at 8 and Oct. 5 at 3.)

Amato Opera—Final performances of "Falstaff." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Oct. 3-4 at 7:30 and Oct. 5 at 2:30.)

Yu Opera Company of Shanghai—Two staged presentations by the ensemble, which comprises twenty-five singers and actors plus a fifteen-member orchestra. Oct. 5 at 2: Excerpts from "The Princess," "Pearl Pagoda," and "Dream of Red Chamber." . . . At 7: "The Butterfly Lover," a full-length work that is salaciously billed as "the first opera to deal with a homosexual love story." (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. For information about tickets, call 431-9740.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur concludes the orchestra's traversal of Brahms's symphonies by leading the composer's Fourth (and last), in a program that also includes Schubert's Symphony No. 3 and "Wanderer" Fantasy (the latter in Liszt's version for piano and orchestra, here featuring Boris Berezovsky). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Oct. 3-4 at 8 and Oct. 6 at 7:30. . . . **NOTE:** On Oct. 3 at 6:45, in a pre-concert recital open to ticket holders, clarinettist Stanley Drucker, cellist Carter Brey, and pianist Gerald Robbins perform Brahms's Clarinet Trio.)

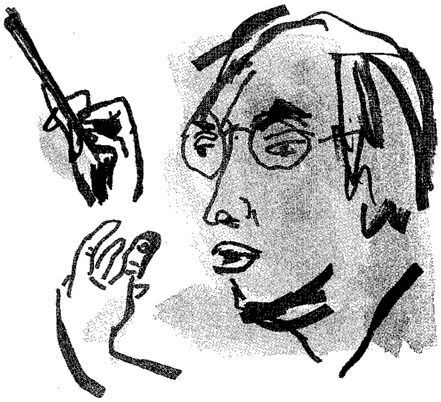
Manhattan School of Music Philharmonia—Glen Barton Cortese conducts two works by John Corigliano—his "Campane di Ravello: A Celebration Piece for Sir Georg Solti" (composed in 1975 for the late conductor's seventy-fifth birthday) and his 1967 Piano Concerto (featuring David Buechner)—as well as Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" (in Ravel's classic orchestration). (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Oct. 4 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

City Island Baroque Ensemble—Flutist Eugenia Zukerman and her daughter, soprano Ariana Zukerman, are featured in a program that includes Bach's Cantata No. 209. Mordechai Rechtman conducts. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. Oct. 5 at noon.)

Chicago Symphony Orchestra—Though the opening of Carnegie Hall's season is always a glittering occasion, this year it will also be a slightly sad one, as the Chicago Symphony mourns the death last month of Georg Solti, its conductor emeritus. Daniel Barenboim, who succeeded Solti as music director in 1989, leads a pair of concerts. Oct. 6 at 7: Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 and Elgar's Cello Concerto (featuring Yo-Yo Ma). . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 8: Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra (Op. 16), Mozart's Piano Concerto in B-Flat Major (K. 595, with Mr. Barenboim doubling as soloist), and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5.

Juilliard Orchestra—Presenting Brahms's “Variations on a Theme by Haydn,” Mozart's C-Major Piano Concerto (K. 503, with Gabrielus Alekna), and Dvořák's Symphony No. 8. Otto-Werner Mueller conducts. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Oct. 6 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

“Dazzled by Light”—An AIDS-benefit concert, in which the Chanticleer vocal ensemble (whose founder, Louis Botto, died of AIDS this past February) performs a wide-ranging selection of Renaissance and modern music. Of special note is a group of five pieces written by Renaissance masters in remembrance of departed colleagues: Josquin des Prez's elegy for Ockeghem, Ockeghem's for Binchois, Byrd's for Tallis, Morley's for Weelkes, and Andrea Gabrieli's for Willaert. The New York City Gay Men's Chorus also makes a cameo appearance. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Oct. 7 at 8. For information about tickets, call 581-1212.)



Philippe Herreweghe conducts the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble.

KAREN CALDICOTT

RECITALS

Feral Film Festival—This music-and-movie series continues with a performance of Gerd Zacher's “Symphony for Fifty-two Champagne Glasses” (played by six executants), on a program that also includes screenings of Beckett's “Film” and other shorts. (The Salon, 432 E. 91st St. Oct. 1 at 8. For reservations, call 718-230-3362.)

Bargemusic—Presenting string quartets by Brahms (in A Minor, Op. 51, No. 2) and Dvořák (in F Major, Op. 96), performed by violinists Kurt Nikkanen and Mark Peskanov, violist Toby Hoffman, and cellist Paul Katz (formerly of the now-disbanded Cleveland String Quartet). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061. Oct. 2 at 7:30 and Oct. 5 at 4.)

“The World of Szymanowski”—Soprano Laura Grazyna Kafka, pianist Piotr Folkert, and the members of the Penderecki String Quartet perform the composer's “Children's Songs,” Violin Sonata, and String Quartet No. 2, among other works. (Weill Recital Hall. Oct. 3 at 8.)

Jerome Rose—Pianist, performing Schubert's Sonatas in C Minor (D. 958), A Major (D. 959), and B-Flat Major (D. 960). (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Oct. 3 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Philippe Herreweghe, a startlingly imaginative conductor who makes headlines quietly, leads fourteen players in Schoenberg's arrangements of Mahler's orchestral song cycle “Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen” (“Songs of a Wayfarer,” featuring baritone William Sharp) and symphony manqué “Das Lied von der Erde” (“The Song of the Earth,” with contralto Annette Markert and tenor Thomas Young). Since Mahler's symphonic works are among the most expansive in the repertoire, Schoenberg faced a challenge in reducing them to chamber forces, which he did for the Society for Private Musical Performances, a connoisseurs' musical club he founded in Vienna in 1918. (The group disbanded before his “Das Lied” transcription was finished; it was brought into final shape only in 1983, by the musicologist Reiner Riehn.) In many instances, Schoenberg's rescorings differ fundamentally from Mahler's originals, yielding new takes on familiar masterpieces. These will not be cheery concerts, since both scores are rich in morbid overtones, but they will offer a rare opportunity to hear the music of one master through the ears of another. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Oct. 3 at 8. . . . ¶ Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway. Oct. 5 at 2. For information about tickets, call 212-840-7470.)

Gidon Kremer—The violinist performs music by Piazzolla with a tango ensemble. (BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100. Oct. 4 at 7:30 and Oct. 5 at 3.)

The Queen's Chamber Band—The early-music (but modern-instrument) ensemble offers sonatas and arias by Bach, Biber, and Handel. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Oct. 5 at 2. For information about tickets, call 932-9462.)

New York Philharmonic Ensembles—Members of the orchestra (with several guests) perform Clara Schumann's Piano Trio, Robert Schumann's “Märchenerzählungen,” and Brahms's C-Minor Piano Quartet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct 5 at 3.)

Arnaldo Cohen—The pianist performs several sonatas by Scarlatti, the Bach-Busoni Chaconne, Chopin's Nocturne in E-Flat Major and Scherzo No. 2, Saint-Saëns's “Danse Macabre” (as transcribed by Liszt), and Liszt's “Fantaisie on ‘Les Huguenots.’ ” (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Oct. 5 at 3.)

Kocian String Quartet—In its New York début recital, the foursome performs quartets by three Czech composers: Fibich, Schulhoff (his First), and Dvořák (his Fourteenth, Op. 105). (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. Oct. 5 at 5.)

Ellada Chakoyan—Soprano, assisted by an instrumental ensemble in a concert that includes vocal chamber works by Schnittke, Hayk Boyadjian, and Konstantin Petrossian. (Weill Recital Hall. Oct. 6 at 7:30.)

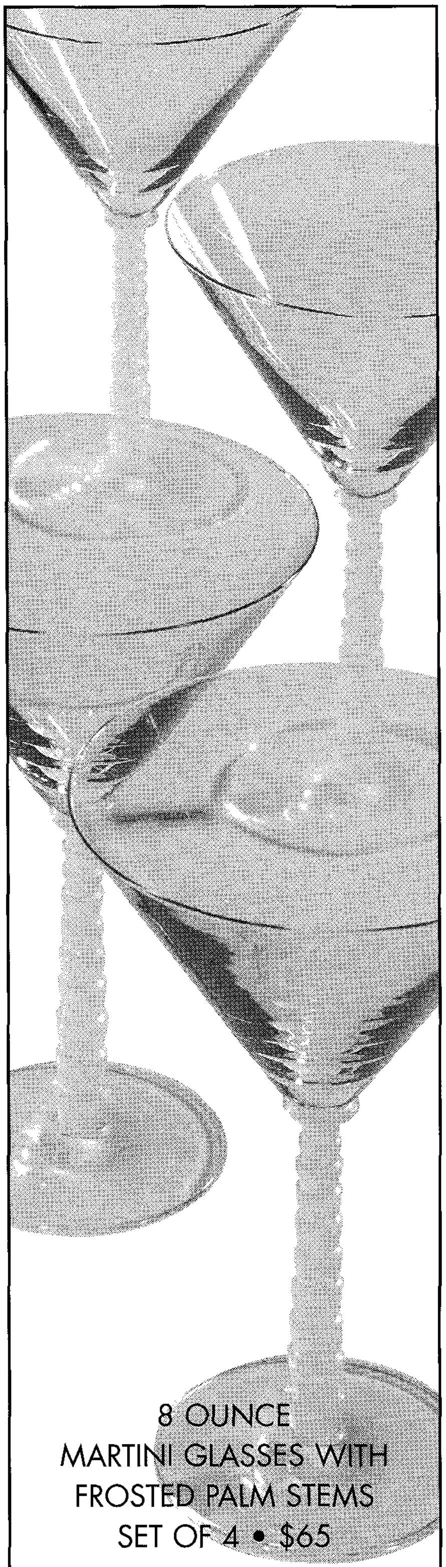
Parnassus—The chamber group, which specializes in twentieth-century music, offers the United States première of Carter's “A 6 Letter Letter” (for unaccompanied English horn), Jonathan Harvey's “Song Offerings,” Mark Gustavson's Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, and Hindemith's “Melancholie” (an obscure song cycle, written in 1919, for mezzo-soprano and string quartet). Susan Narucki is the vocal soloist; Anthony Korf conducts. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 6 at 8.)

Immanuel Davis and Steven Gosling—The flutist and the pianist offer works by Ibert, Gaubert, and Françaix. (Mansfield Hotel, 12 W. 44th St. Oct. 6 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

“Music Mondays”—The concert series of St. James' Episcopal Church opens with a recital in which pianist Alan Murchie (the church's organist) and players from the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony, and the Pittsburgh Symphony perform Mendelssohn's D-Minor Piano Trio and Brahms's Piano Quintet. (865 Madison Ave., at 71st St. Oct. 6 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Eugenia Zukerman and Anthony Newman—The flutist and the harpsichordist present music and readings from eighteenth-century England, including works by Ignaz Pleyel, J. C. Bach, Handel, and Thomas Augustine Arne (of “Rule, Britannia” fame). (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. 930-0571. Oct. 7 at 6.)

Chopin Festival—The first of five evenings in which David Dubal discusses, and young pianists perform, the works of Chopin. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 734-2130. Oct. 7 at 7:30.)



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Tuesday, October 7th, 7:30-8:30 PM
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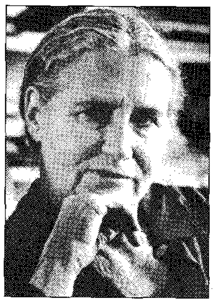
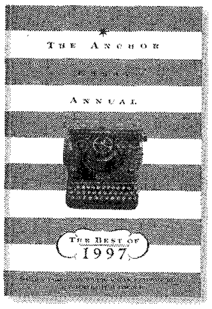
Doris Lessing—author of *The Golden Notebook*—will read from, discuss and sign copies of *Walking in the Shade*, her fascinating new autobiography.



Anchor Essay Panel

Wednesday, October 8th, 7:30-8:30 PM
Union Square, 33 East 17th Street
Reading • Discussion • Signing

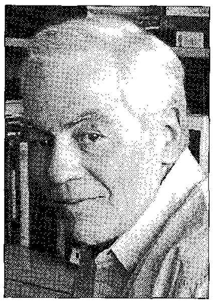


The launching of the *Anchor Essay Annual*, selected and with an introduction by Phillip Lopate. Panel discussion will include contributors Philip Lopate, Vivian Gornick, Daniel Harris, Lynne Sharon Schwartz and Cynthia Ozick.

Jimmy Breslin

Monday, October 13th, 7:30-8:30 PM
Upper West Side
2289 Broadway at 82nd Street
Discussion • Signing

Legendary journalist Jimmy Breslin will discuss and sign copies of *I Want to Thank My Brain for Remembering Me* and *The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight*.



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Franz Pillinger—The Austrian double-bassist, with pianist Georg Steinschaden, performs several of his own compositions plus Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata. (Weill Recital Hall. Oct. 7 at 8.)

Chamber Music at the Y—Works by Beethoven (his "Kakadu" Variations), Schubert, Weber, and Mendelssohn (his D-Minor Piano Trio), performed by flutist Carol Wincenc, violinist Jaime Laredo, cellist Sharon Robinson, and pianist Joseph Kalichstein. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Oct. 7-8 at 8.)

ALSO OF INTEREST

DAN MAREK: Tenor, with colleagues, in a Schubert concert. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Oct. 2 at 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . **SEOUL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF NEW YORK:** Christopher Lee conducts concertos by Beethoven (with pianist Jeong Kyu Kim) and Mozart (with violinist Soomin Jung). (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 4 at 8:30.) . . . **ARCATA STRING QUARTET.** (Wave Hill, 249th St. at Independence Ave., the Bronx. 718-549-3200, ext. 229. Oct. 5 at 2.) . . . **DAN FRANKLIN SMITH:** Performing piano works by Schubert and several Spanish composers. (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. Oct. 5 at 4. Tickets at the door.) . . . **RICHARD KOGAN:** Pianist, in works by Beethoven and Gershwin. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Oct. 5 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . **CYPRESS TRIO:** Piano trios by Haydn and Brahms. (St. Paul's Chapel, Broadway at Fulton St. Oct. 6 at noon. Admission by contribution.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Flashy Fun—Manhattan's sole lighthouse was decommissioned fifty years ago, but it shines again during the Little Red Lighthouse Festival, a daylong celebration devoted to the beacon memorialized, and anthropomorphized, in Hildegarde H. Swift and Lynd Ward's 1942 children's classic, "The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge." Urban Park Rangers will lead tours of the forty-foot-tall cast-iron tower, which stands on Jeffrey's Hook, a rocky point beneath the George Washington Bridge. The day includes musical entertainment and a reading of the story, at 11:30 A.M. (Fort Washington Park. Enter at W. 181st St. Oct. 4, from 10 to 5. For more information, call 360-2774.)

Dog Gone Crazy—Several hundred dachshunds, many dressed in black leather jackets, top hats, clown suits, hot-dog-bun coats, and other costumes, converge in Washington Square Park on Oct. 4, at noon. Their leash-holders are likely to be members of the Dachshund Friendship Club, which sponsors this annual gathering known as the Dachshund Octoberfest. (Rain date: Oct. 5 at noon.)

Readings—Oct. 1 at 7:30: By Paul Auster, from his memoir "Hand to Mouth: A Chronicle of Early Failure." (Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture, 53 Prospect Park W. For reservations, which are required, call 718-783-3075.) . . . ¶ Oct. 3 at 7: By Carolyn Forché and Robert Pinsky, from their poetry. (Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. Tickets at the door.) . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 7: By Suketu Mehta, from his novel "Alphabet," and Ben Katchor, who will supplement his reading with a slide show from his cartoon strip, "Julius Knipl, Real Estate Photographer." (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Oct. 6 at 8: By Doris Lessing, from her autobiography "Walking in the Shade." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

Talks—Oct. 5 at 2: Director Jim Jarmusch discusses his career and presents a screening of his latest work, "Year of the Horse." (American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. 718-784-0077.) . . . ¶ Oct. 5 at 8: Arthur Schlesinger, historian and former special assistant to President Kennedy, and historian Alan Brinkley chat about twentieth-century America. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.) . . . ¶ Oct. 7 at 6: *New Republic* editor James Wood interviews German author W. G. Sebald. (PEN America Center, 568 Broadway, near Prince St. No tickets necessary.)

Walk—Oct. 4 at 1: The Museum of the City of New York offers a guided stroll through Spanish Harlem. (Fifth Ave. at 104th St. 534-1672, ext. 206.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Voluminous

REFLECTING on the loss of his dukedom, the dispossessed Prospero, in "The Tempest," holds, "My library was dukedom large enough." Many book collectors would echo his sentiment—probably none more readily than Kenneth A. Lohf, the retired librarian of rare books and manuscripts at Columbia University, who, like Prospero, relinquished his title but not his enthusiasm. These days he concentrates on his collection of original editions of First and Second World War British poetry. "Fortunately, poetry books are thin, so you can get many more on the shelf," he says. He points out that many world-class libraries—the Bodleian, at Oxford; the Huntington, in San Marino, California; and the Houghton, at Harvard—were once the private collections of wealthy enthusiasts. The Pierpont Morgan Library, here in New York, is still private, yet it has the finest holdings in America of the medieval illuminated manuscripts known as Books of Hours. (The collection is currently on view.) For future book barons, Lohf recommends John Carter's **ABC for Book Collectors** (Oak Knoll) and S. H. Steinberg's classic **Five Hundred Years of Printing** (updated by John Trevitt and published by Oak Knoll).

Anyone who considers book collecting a diversion lacking in thrills has probably missed the novels in which the pastime turns nasty. A labyrinthine library and a deadly book lie at the heart of Umberto Eco's monastic mystery, **The Name of the Rose** (Harcourt Brace). The decaying family library in Donald Antrim's **The Hundred Brothers** (Crown) serves as a menacing backdrop for a blackly comic tale of sibling dysfunction. In Bohumil Hrabal's **Too Loud a Solitude** (Harcourt Brace), the narrator is terrified that his shelving will collapse and crush him under the thousands of volumes he has rescued from a wastepaper processing plant. And, of course, in E. M. Forster's **Howards End** (Signet), the unfortunate Leonard Bast does indeed wind up flattened by a bookcase.

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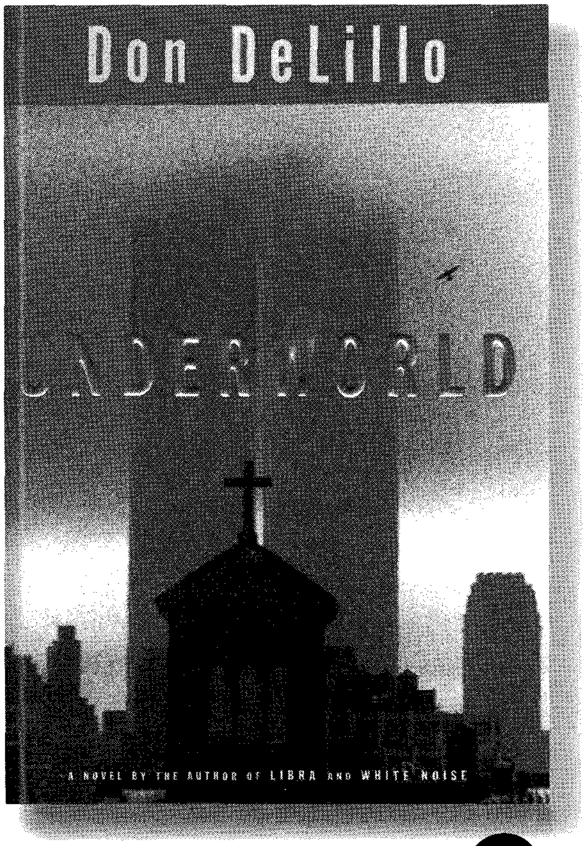

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—Gay Talese

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—*Booklist,* starred review

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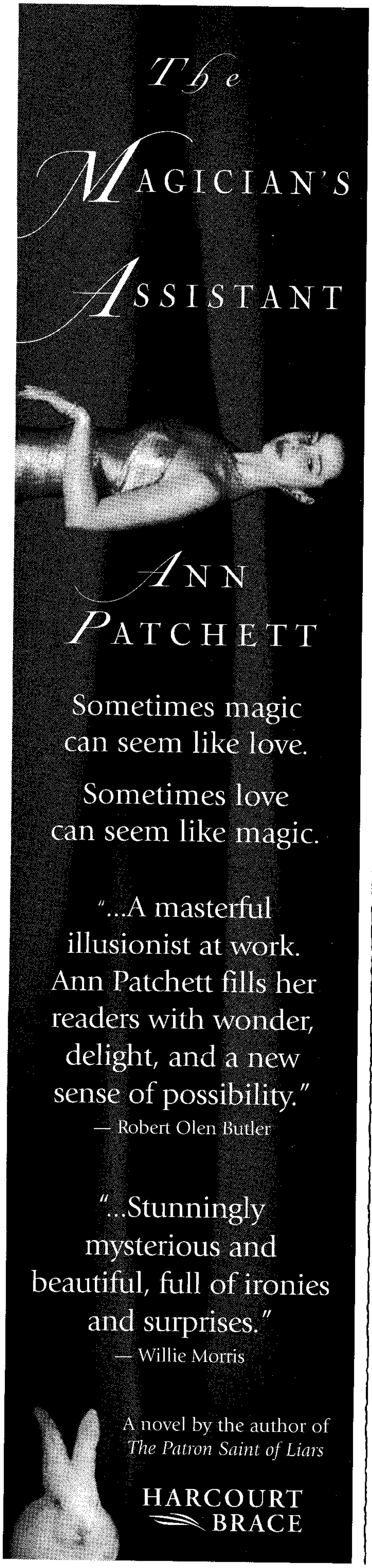

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THE MOVIES

OPENING THIS WEEK

Fast, Cheap & Out of Control—Errol Morris's documentary draws parallels between four unusual men: a lion tamer, a topiary gardener, a mole-rat specialist, and a designer of robots. Opening Oct. 3. (Film Forum 3.)

Kiss the Girls—Morgan Freeman and Ashley Judd star in a suspense thriller about a pathological kidnapper. Directed by Gary Fleder. Opening Oct. 3. (Art Greenwich Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, and 34th Street Showplace.)

Like a Bride—Two young women in Mexico City break with their strict Jewish families, in a 1993 drama directed by Guita Schyfter. In Spanish and Ladino. Opening Oct. 3. (Cinema Village.)

The Locusts—Writer-director John Patrick Kelley's story of a handsome drifter (Vince Vaughn) and a troubled farm family in Kansas in the sixties. Also starring Kate Capshaw, Jeremy Davies, and Ashley Judd. Opening Oct. 3. (Lincoln Square and Village East Cinemas.)

The Matchmaker—Janeane Garofalo plays an aide to an American politician who finds herself in a small Irish town during its annual matchmaking festival, in a romantic comedy directed by Mark Joffe. With David O'Hara, Denis Leary, Jay O. Sanders, and Milo O'Shea. Opening Oct. 3. (Chelsea Cinemas, New York Twin, and Village Theatre VII.)

Nenette and Boni—A nineteen-year-old pizza cook (Gregoire Colin), estranged from his family, reconnects with his sister (Alice Houri), a pregnant fifteen-year-old runaway, in a film written (with Jean-Pol Fargeau) and directed by Claire Denis. In French. Opening Oct. 3. (Quad Cinema.)

U-Turn—Car trouble forces a con man (Sean Penn) to make an unexpected stop in a maniacal little Arizona town, in a picture directed by Oliver Stone. With Jennifer Lopez, Nick Nolte, Powers Boothe, Claire Danes, Joaquin Phoenix, and Billy Bob Thornton. Opening Oct. 3. (Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII.)

Washington Square—A new film version of the Henry James novel about a shy young woman (Jennifer Jason Leigh), her wealthy father (Albert Finney), and a gentleman caller (Ben Chaplin). Directed by Agnieszka Holland. Showing at the New York Film Festival Oct. 3 at 9 and Oct. 4 at 2:30. Opening Oct. 5. (Angelika Film Center and Paris.)

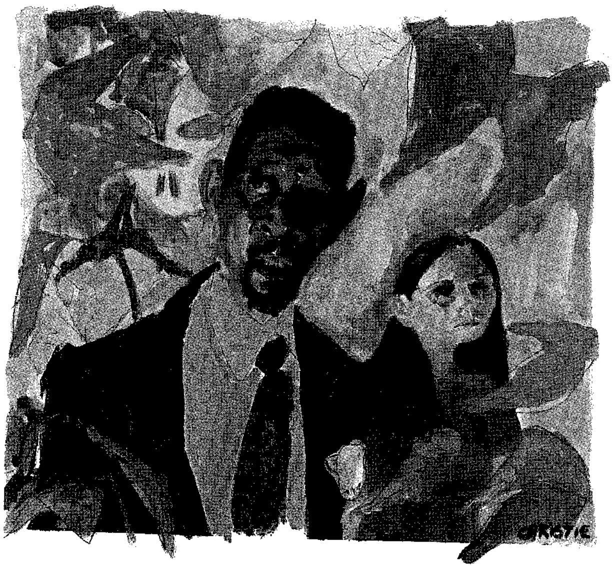
FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

Badlands (1973)—Terrence Malick's début picture, set at the end of the fifties, is about an emotionless young killer (Martin Sheen) and his fifteen-year-old girlfriend (Sissy Spacek), whose killing spree starts in South Dakota. The young lovers are psychologically aberrant and yet just like everybody else; their moral vacuum spreads over the flat, dead landscape. Malick appears to be saying that mass-culture banality is killing our souls and making everybody affectless. An intellectualized movie—shrewd and artful, carefully styled to sustain its low-key view of dissociation—but so preconceived that there's nothing left to respond to. The music is by Carl Orff and Erik Satie.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum 2; starting Oct. 3.)

Cleo from 5 to 7 (1962)—One of the few films directed by a woman in which the viewer can sense a difference. The story is about the moods of a beautiful, chic popular singer (Corinne Marchand) during the two hours she waits to find out if she has cancer. Childish and fearful, she consults her horoscope and goes to a fortune-teller; she buys a hat; she rehearses a song; she cries. And throughout, the writer-director, Agnès Varda, sustains an unsentimental yet subjective tone that is almost unique in the history of movies. In French.—*P. K.* (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 5 and Oct. 7.)

The Edge—The New Zealand director Lee Tamahori, working from a screenplay by David Mamet, delivers an exciting man-against-nature movie full of spectacular wilderness backdrops and gruesome violence. A billionaire with a heart of gold (Anthony Hopkins) thinks his supermodel wife (Elle Macpherson) is having an affair with a famous (straight!) fashion photographer (Alec Baldwin); after a plane crash strands the two men in the Alaskan forest, an amusing game of cat and mouse develops. The movie suffers from murky plotting and motivation—it's hard to believe that a tycoon as smart as Hopkins's character would have anything to fear from an operator as simple as Baldwin's. Still, Tamahori shapes each scene so brilliantly, Donald M. McAlpine shoots it so breathtakingly, and Hopkins underplays so convincingly (this is his best performance since "The Silence of the Lambs") that the film rises above its shaky script and becomes a thrillingly powerful adventure.—*Bruce Diones* (Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

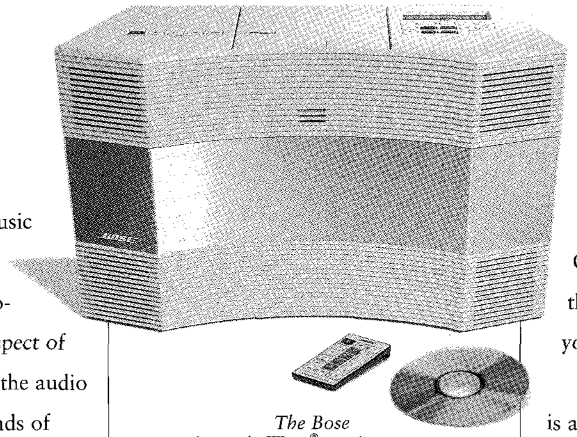


Morgan Freeman and Ashley Judd in "Kiss the Girls."

The End of Violence—Wim Wenders' latest is as philosophy-packed as his most oblique work, but it's more satisfying as entertainment. Bill Pullman plays a despicable producer of violent mega-

GREG CHRISTIE

LESS THAN A FOOT TALL, YET LOOKED UP TO BY SO MANY.



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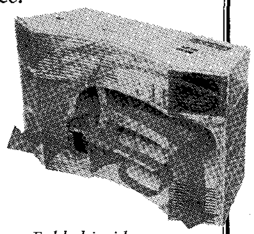

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hits who gets kidnapped; he escapes, but the encounter with real violence provokes a crisis of conscience. (Also, he realizes that someone is trying to kill him.) Traci Lind is a stuntwoman trying to make it as an actress, and Gabriel Byrne is a computer wizard working on a sinister surveillance project. The script, by Nicholas Klein, takes a while to connect its various threads; it makes too many didactic turns and tries to cram in all kinds of violence, from gangsta rap to incest to El Salvadoran death squads. Still, the film represents a thoughtful attempt by Wenders to get beyond his usual listless anomie. On one level, it's about a conspiracy; on another, it addresses the frightening but also hopeful idea that we're all connected.—*Sarah Kerr* (86th Street East Twin, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Full Monty—An amiable light comedy, directed by Peter Cattaneo, about six unemployed British steelworkers who mount an all-male strip show for cash. The script, by Simon Beaufoy, is clean and well developed. Each character is given his bit to do, and when the motley crew comes together the actors all work wonderfully with one another, finding a sexy, warm performance rhythm as they gyrate to some classic seventies disco. Two actors—Mark Addy, who plays an overweight, in-

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THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110).
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, Seventh Ave. between 56th and 57th Sts.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St.
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
86th Street East Twin, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Embassy I, Broadway at 46th St.
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Manhattan Twin, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Metro Cinema I and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
National Twin, Broadway at 44th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
Regency, Broadway at 67th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton I and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
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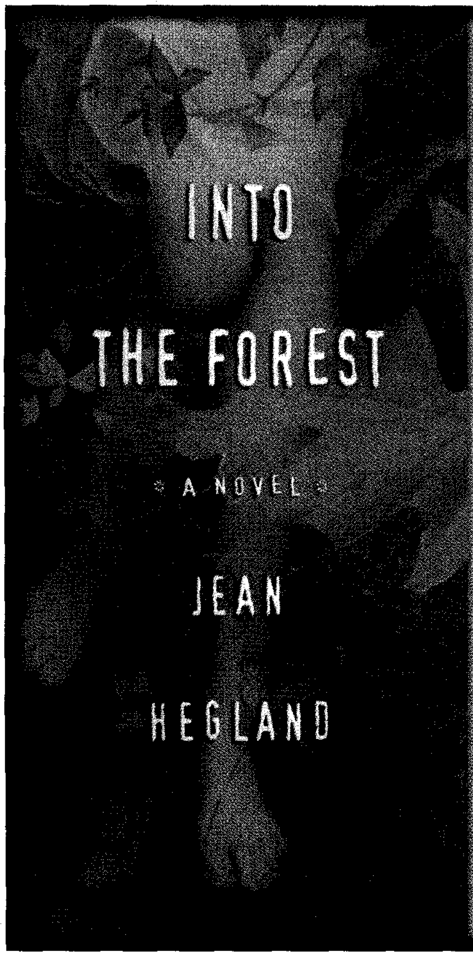

"It was sometimes hard to remember anything unusual was happening in the world beyond our forest. At least here some recognizable shape remains—even now—to our interrupted lives."
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—*Publishers Weekly,* Starred review

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secure worker, and Robert Carlyle, as the ringleader—are sensational.—*B.D.* (Angelika Film Center, Coronet Cinemas, East 85th Street, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.)

The Game—John Brancato and Michael Ferris, the faceless team that wrote "The Net," return with another preposterous no-brainer. But this time the talented director David Fincher turns their paranoiac story line into one of the moodiest, silliest thrillers in years. Michael Douglas is spectacularly arrogant and convincing as a bored, soulless millionaire whose wayward brother (Sean Penn) gives him a gift that sets off all sorts of mind-blowing mayhem. Fincher sets up the scenes quietly and expensively, and the elegant production design (by Jeffrey Beecroft) and cinematography (by Harris Savides, who shoots what may be the blackest blacks ever committed to film) create an atmosphere that keeps the audience curious and edgy. The underrated "Alien^3" and the smash "Seven" proved Fincher a master of spooky mise en scène, but he needs better material than this to really pull it all together; as in a Ridley Scott movie, the striking visuals tell a far more interesting story than the script does.—*B.D.* (Astor Plaza, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas.)

Going All the Way—Director Mark Pellington brings a jittery music-video style to Dan Wakefield's best-selling 1970 novel about two friends bucking repression in fifties Indianapolis. Jeremy Davies is close to perfect as a severely shy young photographer, and Ben Affleck is touching as his confident-stud mentor. But neither Pellington's playfulness nor his actors' finesse can prevent this kind of coming-of-age story, in which young men steer between scary, sexually aggressive women and overbearing mothers, from seeming a little stale.—*S.K.* (Carnegie Hall Cinemas and The Screening Room.)

Opening Oct. 3, Errol Morris's "Fast, Cheap & Out of Control."

WARREN LINN

The Ice Storm—Ang Lee's treatment of Rick Moody's novel about suburban anomie is intelligent but curiously remote: it's a scrupulously neutral look at Yankee pathology. Set in New Canaan, Connecticut, in 1973 (Lee re-creates the decade in all its incriminating detail), the film focusses on two troubled families. Ben Hood (Kevin Kline) is cheating on his silently despairing wife (Joan Allen) with their bitchy neighbor (Sigourney Weaver); the adolescents (including Elijah Wood and Christina Ricci) are unhappier still. The story, which culminates in a disastrous couples-swapping party, benefits from Lee's gently ironic touch; he's less interested in assigning blame for all the misery than in simply documenting the way it spreads and gets absorbed.—*Daphne Merkin* (9/29/97) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

In & Out—Kevin Kline is an Indiana high-school teacher, Joan Cusack is his long-suffering fiancée, and Matt Dillon is a student turned movie star who wins the best-actor Oscar and tells a TV audience of millions that his former teacher is gay. But is he? Paul Rudnick's script deals in deliberate stereotypes and even deliberate tackiness (too many jokes about Richard Simmons), but at least it's high-spirited and appealingly humane. Kline plays his character's sexual ambiguity to the hilt, and the supporting cast has fun, too: Tom Selleck is much sexier as a smarmy gay journalist than he ever was in "Magnum, P.I.," and Bob Newhart does a masterful turn as the school's flustered principal. (It's a sign of the times that Newhart's bashful-prude act, which used to seem so touching, today gets him cast as a villain.) Directed by Frank Oz.—*S.K.* (Chelsea West, Lincoln Square, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Kicked in the Head—Matthew Harrison's comedy starts out strong. Kevin Corrigan plays a hapless slacker who refuses to work or pay rent because he's busy searching for "the truth." This policy puts him at the mercy of the people he mooches off: his uncle (James Woods), a pathological liar connected to the Mob, and his best friend (Michael Rappaport), a volatile alcoholic involved in a shooting war over beer distribution. Corrigan is a young actor with rivetingly bizarre body language and eyes twice as big as Dondi's, and the film is hilarious as long as it chronicles his discomfort. (A couple of times he achieves a silent-film pathos simply by staring.) But his romancing a sad stewardess (Linda Fiorentino) is an implausible misstep, devoid of the irony that has gone before—it's hard to be both clown and love object.—*S.K.* (84th Street Sixplex, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

L.A. Confidential—Curtis Hanson's new thriller, set in Los Angeles in the early fifties, is about a group of cops who between them cover the full

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moral range, all the way from the uptight integrity of Ed Exley (Guy Pearce) to the four-star sadism of Bud White (Russell Crowe)—two men who, despite their sworn enmity, are drawn together as they investigate a multiple killing. The plot, adapted by Hanson and Brian Helgeland from the James Ellroy novel, is both murky and tangled, yet the movie never bogs down. Instead of aping the staccato mania of Ellroy's prose, Hanson forges a more seductive style, pacing the tale with ease and decorating it with one neat performance after another: James Cromwell as the smiling police chief, David Strathairn as an oily pimp, Kim Basinger as one of his prize charges, and, better still, Kevin Spacey as a "celebrity crime-stopper" who gets dragged into the dark and dirty. The film feels violent, but actually it broods on violence, and on the reek of its aftermath, instead of showing it. All in all, a grownup way to get the sweats.—*Anthony Lane* (9/22/97) (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, State, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Myth of Fingerprints—Do we need another film about a Thanksgiving reunion that leads to a crisis in a repressed New England family? Maybe not, but at least Bart Freundlich's début feature is a nicely observed addition to the genre. Roy Scheider and Blythe Danner play the parents in denial; Julianne Moore, Michael Vartan, Noah Wyle, and Laurel Holloman are the kids who have grown up allergic to intimacy. Freundlich has an uncanny ear for the dialogue of avoidance and veiled rage, and an admirable grasp of how hard it is for families to change. He touches on behavioral issues that in another film might provoke long, obvious lectures, meeting them, as in real life, with silent despair or, at best, feeble jokes.—*S.K.* (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

The Peacemaker—George Clooney and Nicole Kidman star in a thriller involving the theft of a nuclear device. Written by Michael Schiffer; directed by Mimi Leder. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

Saratoga Trunk (1946)—A brunette Ingrid Bergman plays the fabulous adventuress Clio Dulaine in this exhilarating travesty of Edna Ferber's costume romance about the railroad robber barons. Bergman is a demimondaine raised in Paris, who returns to plague her father's respectable Creole family in New Orleans and then invades fashionable Saratoga Springs and conquers all, including Gary Cooper, as the gambling Texan Clint Maroon. This is a lavish piece of frivolous, ebullient moviemaking—replete with details dear to the readers of tempestuous fiction. Clio the trollop is Bergman's flirtiest, funniest role; the dark hair seems to liberate her from her usual wholesome blandness. Directed by Sam Wood. A bad, coy three minutes at the very end.—*P.K.* (Anthology Film Archives; starting Oct. 3.)

She's So Lovely—Maureen (Robin Wright Penn) is married to Eddie (Sean Penn), but ten years after Eddie shoots someone and is put away, he comes back and discovers that his beloved wife is married to Joey (John Travolta). The picture, directed by Nick Cassavetes, from a script by his late father, John, is a gruelling exercise in anti-pleasure. And the title is a lie: although it may be ungallant to say so, she isn't lovely in the least. She's a complete pain.—*A.L.* (9/8/97) (Cinema 3rd Avenue, Embassy 2, 19th Street East 6, and Village East Cinemas.)

Sunday—An independent film that bypasses Gen X malaise in favor of grown-up sadness and resilience, starring David Suchet as a downsized I.B.M. tax accountant and Lisa Harrow as a hard-up actress, who meet one Sunday in Queens and trade consoling fictions. The elegant script was co-written by James Nossiter, who also directed, and James Lasdun.—*D.M.* (9/15/97) (Film Forum 3; through Oct. 2.)

A Thousand Acres—Even viewers unfamiliar with Jane Smiley's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel won't be surprised when the cozy Midwestern farmhouse here turns out to be a hotbed of domestic tyranny. Larry Cook (Jason Robards) is the sort of indomitable patriarch that Orson Welles used to play to perfection, and these days is more than likely to be outed as a child abuser; when he impulsively decides to divide his beloved and lucrative farm among his three daughters (Jessica Lange, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Jennifer Jason Leigh), the family is wrenched apart and accusations fly. Lange, who looks regal, even in yellow plaid pajamas, almost manages to save this synthetic "women's film," which feels as if several unusually glamorous farm wives had been invited to spill their incest stories. Somewhere in the corn rows is a message about childhood damage, but it gets lost in the golden light and the facile, soap-operatic transitions. Directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse.—*D.M.* (9/29/97) (Cinema I, Guild, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

Vagabond (1985)—Agnès Varda wrote and directed this scrupulously hardheaded film about an eighteen-year-old girl on the road, a deliberately homeless drifter who lives on handouts, thefts, a little prostitution, and the occasional odd job. Varda presents the movie as a documentary; the characters are the sullen, suspicious, vacant-eyed young girl (played immaculately by Sandrine Bonnaire) and the witnesses to her last weeks. The purity and boldness of Varda's approach may call Robert Bresson to mind; this is the work of a visual artist. But we see the closed-off girl strictly from the outside. Varda's flat-out approach excludes the uses of the imagination—both hers and ours. In French.—*P.K.* (Museum of Modern Art; Oct. 3.)

At the American Museum of the Moving Image, Johnny Depp in "Dead Man."

JEFF DECOSTER

ALSO PLAYING

AIR FORCE ONE (reviewed in our issue of 7/28/97): Criterion Center and 64th and 2nd. . . . **THE ASSIGNMENT:** Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, 19th Street East 6, 64th and 2nd, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **AUSTIN POWERS: INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **CHASING AMY** (4/7/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **COP LAND** (8/18/97): Art Greenwich Twin, Embassy 1, and 59th Street East Cinema. . . . **FACE/OFF** (7/14/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **FIRE:** Quad Cinema. . . . **100 PROOF:** Film Forum. . . . **IN THE COMPANY OF MEN:** Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **LATIN BOYS GO TO HELL:** Quad Cinema. . . . **THE LAY OF THE LAND:** Quad Cinema. . . . **A LIFE APART:** Quad Cinema. . . . **THE LONG WAY HOME:** Quad Cinema. . . . **MEN IN BLACK** (7/7/97): Criterion Center and Manhattan Twin. . . . **MRS. BROWN** (8/4/97): Carnegie Hall Cinemas and Cinema II. . . . **MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING** (6/16/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **MY NEW PARTNER AT THE RACE:** Anthology Film Archives. . . . **THE PILLOW BOOK:** Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **SHALL WE DANCE?:** Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **SOUL FOOD:** Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Gotham Cinema, Metro Cinema, Orpheum VII, National Twin, and Waverly. . . . **ULEE'S GOLD** (6/16/97): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **WISHMASTER:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Manhattan Twin, and Orpheum VII.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

New York Film Festival—The annual festival of recent international films. Oct. 1 at 6: "Martin (Hache)" (Adolfo Aristarain, Argentina and Spain). . . . Oct. 1 at 9:15 and Oct. 2 at 6: "Kitchen" (Yim Ho, Hong Kong and Japan). . . . Oct. 2 at 9:15 and Oct. 4 at 11:45 P.M.: "Kiss or Kill" (Bill Bennett, Australia). . . . Oct. 3 at 6 and Oct. 5 at 1:30: "Ma Vie en Rose" (Alain Berliner; Belgium, France, and United Kingdom). . . . Oct. 3 at 9 and Oct. 4 at 2:30: "Washington Square" (Agnieszka Holland, United States). . . . Oct. 4 at 10 A.M.: "Public Housing" (Fred Wiseman, United States). . . . Oct. 4 at 5:30 and Oct. 5 at 7:30: "Destiny" (Youssef Chahine, Egypt and France). . . . Oct. 4 at 8:45 and Oct. 5 at 4:30: "The Sweet Hereafter" (Atom Egoyan, Canada). . . . Oct. 6 at 6: "Voyage to the Beginning of the World" (Manoel de Oliveira, Portugal and France). . . . Oct. 6 at 9 and Oct. 7 at 6: "Deep Crimson" (Arturo Ripstein, Mexico and France). . . . Oct. 7 at 9:15: "Fallen Angels" (Wong Kar-Wai, Hong Kong). (Alice Tully Hall. For tickets, call 875-5050.)

Film Forum 2, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through Oct. 2: "Repulsion" (1965, Roman Polanski). . . . From Oct. 3: "Badlands" (†).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films adapted from British stage productions. Oct. 2 at 2:30: "The Admirable Crichton" (1957, Lewis Gilbert). . . . Oct. 2 at 6: "The Holly and the Ivy" (1952, George More O'Ferrall). . . . Oct. 3 at 2:30: "The Homecoming" (1973, Peter Hall). . . . Oct. 3 at 8: "Butley" (1974, Harold Pinter). . . . Oct. 4 at 5: "The Ware Case" (1938, Robert Stevenson). . . . ¶ Oct. 2 at 6:30, Oct. 3 at 12:30 and 6, Oct. 4-5 at 2:30, and Oct. 7 at 6: Nearly a hundred award-winning British commercials made for television and cinema in 1996. . . . ¶ A program of films directed by Agnès Varda; in French, with English subtitles. Oct. 3 at 6 and Oct. 5 at 5: "Happiness" (1964). . . . Oct. 3 at 8: "Vagabond" (†). . . . Oct. 4 at 2 and Oct. 6 at 6: Four short films. . . . Oct. 4 at 5 and Oct. 6 at 2:30: "La Pointe Courte" (1954). . . . Oct. 5 at 2 and Oct. 7 at 6: "Cleo from 5 to 7" (†). . . . Oct. 7 at 2:30: "The Creatures" (1965).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of films directed by Wojciech Has; in Polish, with English subtitles. Oct. 1 at 2 and 6:15 and Oct. 2 at 4 and 8: "How to Be Loved" (1963). . . . Oct. 1 at 4 and 8:15 and Oct. 2 at 2 and 6:15: "Codes" (1966). . . . Oct. 3 and Oct. 5 at 2 and 7:30: "The Hour-Glass Sanatorium" (1973). . . . Oct. 3 and Oct. 5 at 4:30 and Oct. 6 at 7:10: "The Doll" (1969). . . . Oct. 4 at 2: "The Memoirs of a Sinner" (1986). . . . Oct. 4 at 4:15: "The Tribulations of Balthazar Kober" (1988). . . . Oct. 6 at 2 and Oct. 7 at 2 and 7:10: "The Uneventful Story" (1982). . . . Oct. 6 at 4:15 and Oct. 7 at 4:15 and 9:20: "Write and Fight" (1985). . . . ¶ Oct. 4 at 7, 9:30, and midnight: "Year of the Horse" (1996, Jim Jarmusch).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Oct. 4 at 2: "Dead Man" (1995, Jim Jarmusch). . . . Oct. 4 at 4:30: "Tigrero: A Film That Was Never Made" (1994, Mika Kaurismaki).

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—Oct. 7 at 7: "Love on the Run" (1979, François Truffaut; in French). . . . Oct. 7 at 8:45: "François Truffaut: Stolen Portrait" (1993, Michel Pascal and Serge Toubiana).

From Paris to Hollywood—The Alliance Française presents a series of French films (shown in Florence Gould Hall) alongside the American films based on them (shown in Tinker Auditorium). Oct. 7 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "The Things of Life" (1970, Claude Sautet; in French). . . . Oct. 7 at 6:15 and 8:45: "Intersection" (1994, Mark Rydell). (Both located at 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160.)

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Oct. 5 at 7, the feature will be "Dead Ringer" (1964, Paul Henreid).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—Oct. 1 at 10:05 and Oct. 2 at 10: "La Haine" (1994, Mathieu Kassovitz; in French). . . . Oct. 2 at 4 and 8:15: "The House by the River" (1950, Fritz Lang). . . . Oct. 2 at 5:40 and 9:55: "Hangmen Also Die" (1943, Lang). . . . Oct. 3 at 4 and 8:30: "Knife in the Water" (1962, Roman Polanski; in Polish). . . . Oct. 3 at 5:45 and 10:15: "Mr. Arkadin" (1955, Orson Welles). . . . Oct. 3 at 8:05 and 10:35; Oct. 4-5 at 3:30, 8:05, and 10:35; Oct. 6 at 8:05 and 10:40; and Oct. 7 at 8:05 and 10:35: "Saratoga Trunk" (†). . . . Oct. 4 at 3 and 7:30: "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965, Federico Fellini; in Italian). . . . Oct. 4 at 5:40 and 10:10: "Made in USA" (1966, Jean-Luc Godard; in French). . . . Oct. 5 at 4 and 8: "Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion" (1970, Elio Petri; in Italian). . . . Oct. 5 at 6:05 and 10:05: "The Sleeping Car Murders" (1965, Costa-Gavras; in French).

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POLO RALPH LAUREN
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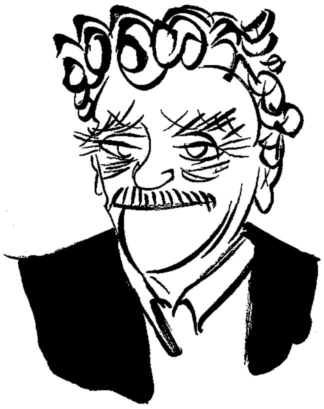
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

THE LITERARY LIFE

And so it goes. Vonnegut's last book turns out a lifetime of loyal readers.

THE doors of Barnes & Noble's flagship store in Union Square had barely opened last Monday morning when people began staking out their spots for that night's book event. By six o'clock, the place was full; hundreds of disappointed fans, some of whom had travelled from other states, were being turned away. According to Dennis Wurst, a Barnes & Noble coördinator for national events, it was "the biggest such event Barnes & Noble ever had anywhere for a writer"—a category that, in his mind, does not include celebrity publishing phenomena such as Howard Stern and Hillary Clinton. "The minute the first people saw him, they started clapping and stood up as he walked through the room," the photographer Jill Krementz recalls. "It was like being with Muhammad Ali. I felt like I was his trainer."



Kurt Vonnegut

In fact, she is his wife: the writer who elicited this rare literary adulation was Kurt Vonnegut, and the novel that he autographed until his wrist ached is being touted as his last. "Timequake," as Vonnegut explains in a self-effacing prologue, represents the husk of a novel that he worked on for a decade and finally abandoned in despair, vanquished by a narrative that simply wouldn't cohere. A disconnected set of musings, some autobiographical, some in the voice of his fictional alter ego, Kilgore Trout, "Timequake" is a rueful, brooding meditation on the premature death of Vonnegut's sister, the death of his first wife, the recent death of his brother, and his firmly held belief that "being alive is a crock of shit."

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

Does it matter that Vonnegut has written all this before? Not really. "Timequake" is a thin but engaging read, and the early reviews have been generous. Valerie Sayers, summing it up in the *Times Book Review*, said, "Vonnegut may not have finished the novel, but for a generation of readers he *still writes the book.*"

It's actually several generations. The intense enthusiasm for the author among readers of every age has taken editors at Putnam, Vonnegut's publisher, by surprise. "He's become a beloved cult figure," says Phyllis Grann, the president of Penguin Putnam, Inc. "It wasn't just the size of the crowd that amazed us," Michael Barson, Putnam's associate director of publicity, adds. "It was that it spanned all ages, from N.Y.U. kids with pierced ears to the kind of people in their thirties and forties that you and I see all day long."

Vonnegut's popularity in the under-thirty crowd is attested to by the dozens of Web sites devoted to him, including one titled "Stories I wrote when I was sixteen and thought I was Kurt Vonnegut." Last month, a Chicago newspaper columnist briefly became an Internet celebrity when an unidentified hoaxer circulated one of the columnist's items labeled as a commencement speech by Vonnegut. (Vonnegut himself claims to find E-mail "spooky.") But the author also maintains a following in those pockets of the country where the sixties counterculture lingers. Ten minutes after tickets went on sale for the author's appearance at the Brattle Theatre, in Cambridge, the event was sold out. Cody's, a bookstore in Berkeley, is planning a big event. "We ordered three hundred books," Andy Ross, the store's owner, told me. Putnam now has a hundred and fifty-one thousand copies in print and is already going back to press.

Vonnegut, reached on the phone in South Carolina, where he was giving a lecture, was characteristically bemused and affable when he was asked about this surge of acclaim. "It's like what Lyndon Baines Johnson said about politics," he answered, in a cigarette-roughened voice. "It ain't hard. All you have to do is hang around and go to funerals." More seriously, he added, "People are sentimental about me now. I'm not waving my hands in the air looking for attention." Was it true that "Timequake" would be his curtain call? "Sure. The simple few things I have to say—I've said 'em all." He didn't sound regretful. "I can look back on my life's work. I'm completely in print. I don't see it as a freestanding novel, but as the last chapter in one long book." He signed off with a terse, Kilgore Trout-like benediction: "Go with God." And he meant it.

—JAMES ATLAS

FRONTIERS OF SCIENCE

Paleontology's war on profiteers lands a T. rex at Sotheby's.

"THERE she is," says David Redden, the executive vice-president in charge of "unusual sales" at Sotheby's. In the auction firm's East Harlem warehouse, beyond rows of sheeted paintings, marble statues, and bric-a-brac, is a large metal cage. “Rather impressive, don’t you think?”

Inside lies the largest and best-preserved specimen of a Tyrannosaurus rex yet discovered. This monster of the late Cretaceous Period, which was forty-one feet long and weighed seven tons in its prime, was dug out of a cliff in South Dakota seven years ago and nicknamed Sue by its discoverers. It was only the twelfth T. rex to be found in the world, and on October 4th it will become the first ever to be sold at auction.

Sue’s bones reveal what happened in the last minutes of her life, sixty-five million years ago. Teeth marks across the five-foot-long skull indicate that she was attacked by another T. rex, which fed off the flesh on the left side of her rib cage before abandoning the carcass in a shallow streambed, where sediment preserved the bones.

But it was a fight of another kind that landed Sue in Sotheby’s warehouse. The man who excavated the dinosaur, Peter Larson, of Hill City, South Dakota, is the largest commercial fossil dealer in the United States, and he has just spent eighteen months in jail. In May, 1992, the F.B.I. raided Larson’s Black Hills Institute, a state-of-the-art paleontology lab, and confiscated Sue, charging that she had been improperly removed from federal land. Larson maintained that the fossil had come from the private property of a Cheyenne River Sioux named Maurice Williams, and that he had paid Williams five thousand dollars to remove the remains.

A judge eventually determined that Williams’s land was indeed private. However, it was held in trust for him by the government—an arrangement designed to protect Native Americans from property speculators. Because Sue was deemed part of the land, the court ruled that Williams had no right to sell the fossil without the approval of the Department of the Interior. But the government, in its role as guardian of Williams’s land, was obliged to promote Williams’s best interests—hence the decision to auction Sue at Sotheby’s.

Now Larson, whose legal fees have left him nearly broke, has found a financial backer in a Rapid City, South Dakota, construction magnate named Stanford Adelstein. With Adelstein’s help, Larson hopes to be the high bidder so that he can resurrect his original plan to restore Sue and make her the centerpiece of a new fossil museum in Hill City. Even if he loses the bidding—which could reach five million dollars—Sue may return to the Black Hills Institute. The dinosaur still needs several hundred thousand dollars’ worth of meticulous work to extricate the bones from the remaining matrix and preserve them—the kind of work that Larson does better than just about anyone in the world. For all that, the sandy-haired forty-five-year-old, who has no degree in paleontology, is anathema to many academics in the field. They fear that profit-driven amateur collectors will contaminate sites and let valuable specimens disappear into private hands, becoming unavailable for research—never mind the fact that more people looking means that far more specimens will be found.

Drawing on the hostile testimony of these academics—known as “the priesthood”—the South Dakota district attorney’s office opened a broader criminal investigation of Larson’s business, alleging that he had systematically pilfered fossils from government land and was engaged in a criminal conspiracy to sell them. When the case went to trial, in 1995, a jury found Larson innocent of all felony charges related to fossils. However, he was found guilty of two currency violations—failing to declare traveller’s checks in excess of ten thousand dollars on a couple of trips abroad—and was sentenced to prison.

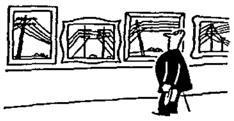
Although Larson was released from jail in August, he is still legally prohibited from leaving the state of South Dakota, so Adelstein will be bidding at Sotheby’s on his behalf. “I would like to use Sue as a way to heal things—to get together with scientists to do work on it, and calm some fears,” Larson says. “She’s the most famous fossil in the world.”

Meanwhile, Robert Bakker, a dinosaur expert who is a curator at the Tate Museum, in Casper, Wyoming, and who was consulted in the making of “The Lost World,” resigned from the Society of Vertebrate Paleontogy to protest Larson’s treatment. “It was the most disillusioning thing I have seen in my forty-one years as a paleontologist,” he says. “We Ph.D. scientists are treated with entirely too much respect. What pompous airbags we are.”

—TERRY McCARTHY

THE GALLERY SCENE

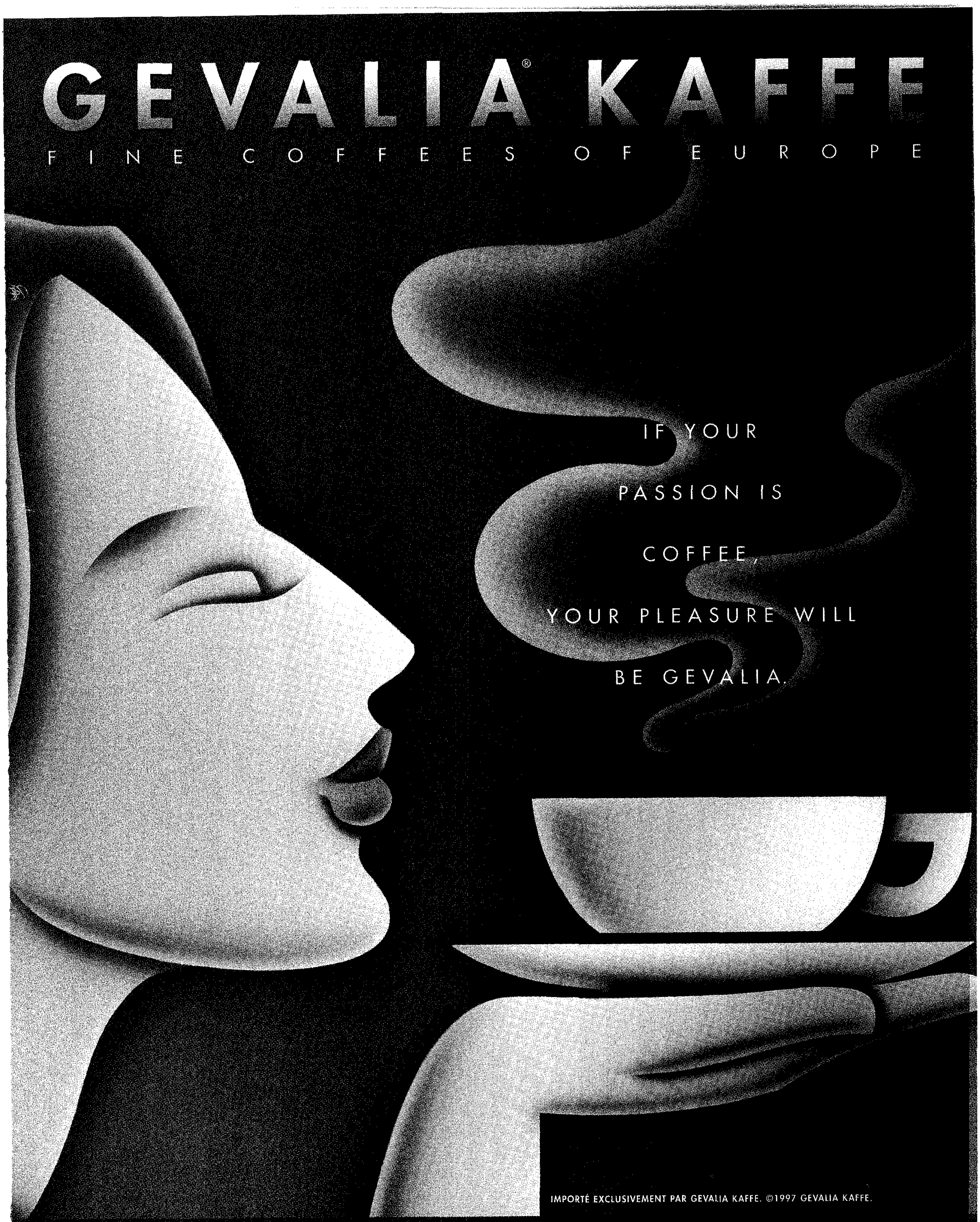
Art imitates paving material in a Chelsea parking lot.



IN a crumbling parking lot bounded by a battered chain-link fence at the corner of Twentieth Street and Tenth Avenue, under a shattered but still working street lamp, stands—or, rather, sits, or sprawls—a hulking, four-ton chunk of asphalt that Kenny, the parking-lot attendant, has taken to calling “the blob.”

“When they took it out of the crate, it was five feet tall,” he says. “But tar is flexible, so it just sagged down, and down, and down.” The blob now looks like a melting square of Baker’s chocolate the size of a Honda Civic. “People keep standing and looking,” Kenny reports. “They say, ‘What is it?’ And I say, ‘What is it? It’s a blob.’ ”

The Alexandre de Folin gallery, down West Twentieth Street, knows better. The gallery staff refers to the blob by its official name, “Untitled.” It’s one in a series of shapes that have been created over the years by a Swedish artist named Mikael Lundberg. “Untitled” could not appear in the gallery, as planned, during the recent Downtown Arts Festival and Chelsea Art Walk. A press release states only, “Due to circumstances beyond our control, Mikael Lundberg’s installation of the bitumen cube can now be seen on the southwest corner of Tenth Avenue and West 20th Street.” The “circumstances” are that the gallery’s elevator could not support the weight of the four-ton cube along with the one-ton forklift that would have been required to unload it. Still, the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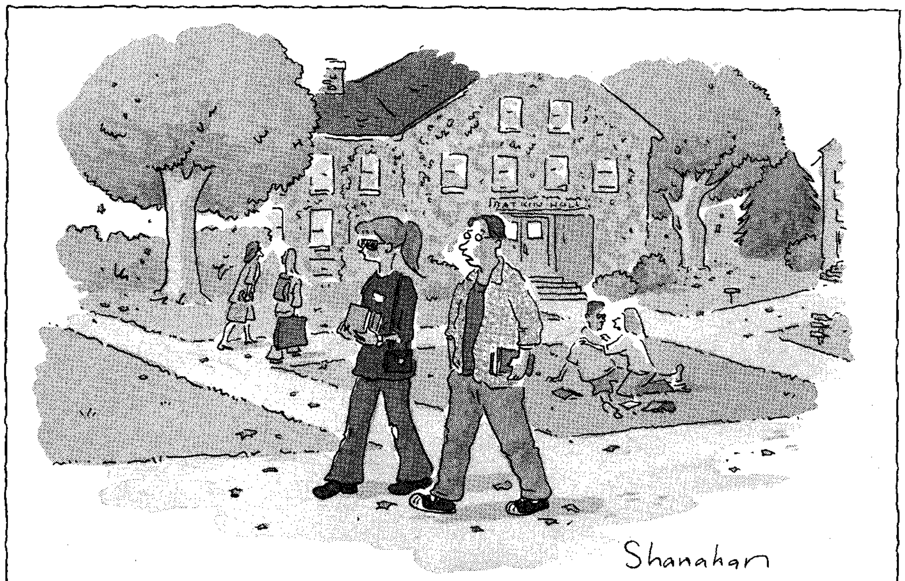
gallery has adapted, and, according to the press release, photographs of the cube as it melts and shifts during the next weeks will be exhibited there, "to illustrate the rate of the cube's change and decay." Natalie Rivera, the gallery's director, explains, "That's part of Mikael's work. He grabs hold of the Ethereal." Meanwhile, down the street, the Ethereal is seeping into nearby parking spaces. "We're losin' spots here," Kenny complains. "They should do us a favor and pave the lot with it."

"Oh, my God," Rivera says. "We would love that, because we were thinking, What do we do with it afterward?"

—LIESL SCHILLINGER



"I miss my mom's home-cooked methamphetamine."

THE PICTURES

How do movie stars see themselves? Consider the options.

DIC TION ARY

DEMI MOORE'S physical self-fashioning has been so compelling to watch over the years that it has sometimes been easy to forget that she must have an inner life as well. A glimpse of the workings of Moore's imagination has, however, just been provided: she has bought the film rights to Axel Madsen's biography of Coco Chanel, and, in an unlikely but revealing bit of casting—somehow it's easier to imagine Moore as Karl Lagerfeld—indicated her intention to play the unbuff designer.

Given that a lot of Americans fantasize about living the life of a movie star, it's intriguing to learn who it is that movie stars fantasize about being. Sometimes, it's straightforward projection. The rights to the story of Dorothy Dandridge, the singer-turned-actress whose pioneering career and tumultuous marital life have been chronicled by the biographer Donald Bogle, have been bought by Whitney Houston, the singer-turned-actress whose pioneering career and tumultuous marital life have been chronicled by the *National Enquirer*. Less easy to fathom was Victoria Principal's passing interest in acquiring the rights to the life of Hedda Nussbaum. Sylvester Stallone nurtures a long-standing and rather touching desire to play the neurasthenic intellectual Edgar Allan Poe, which might explain why he adopted eyeglasses some years back.

With what looks like wishful thinking, many actors want to play major artists. Ed Harris intends to star in a Jackson Pollock bio-pic. Barbra Streisand once optioned the life of Diane Arbus, and had plans, now abandoned, to play Lee Krasner in her own Pollock picture. In a notable display of independence, Tom Hanks fancies himself not in the arts but in science. He bought the film rights to Dennis Overbye's book "Lonely Hearts of the Cosmos," with the intention of playing a character inspired by the real-life cosmologist Allan Sandage. Overbye's agent at I.C.M., Kristine Dahl, says, "I've always heard that Hanks wanted to play a genius."

—REBECCA MEAD

THE POET'S MIND AT WORK

Adrienne Rich extends the culture wars to the National Medal of Arts.

TURNING down prizes has fine literary precedents. Sartre refused the Nobel. William Saroyan rejected the Pulitzer. Gore Vidal declined membership in the Institute of Arts and Letters, telegramming the institute that he already held a Diners Club card.

But what did Adrienne Rich have in mind when she turned down a National Medal of Arts? The eleven winners of the award were not publicly announced until a few days ago. But the original twelve honorees all were notified confidentially in July—which provoked Rich to send a letter to Jane Alexander, the chairwoman of the National Endowment for the Arts. "The very meaning of art, as I understand it, is incompatible with the cynical politics of this administration," wrote the sixty-eight-year-old poet, who sent a copy to the President and then released the missive to the press. But even those familiar with Rich's antiwar activism, and her frequent criticism of Presidents Reagan and Bush, didn't quite understand the slap at Clinton. That week, Congress was considering eliminating funding for the N.E.A. But the President had already threatened to veto this bill. In a later essay, Rich explained that she acted because of long-standing objections to the nation's economic inequalities and its institutionalized racism.

Officially, the White House would not comment, but privately a staffer in the First Lady's office, which handles arts matters, said she and her colleagues felt sandbagged, and a bit hurt. They believe that the Clinton Administration should get credit for rescuing the awards from mediocrity, after President Bush bypassed the National Council on the Arts' suggestions in 1992 and gave Minnie Pearl the nation's highest artistic honor.

The council, which is chosen by the

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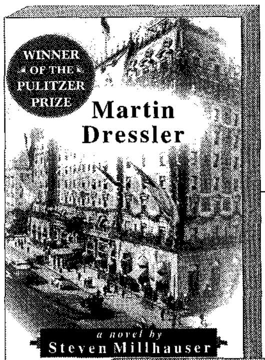
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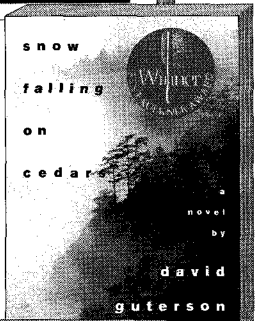
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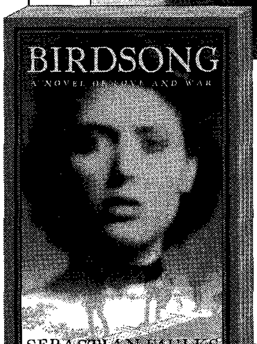
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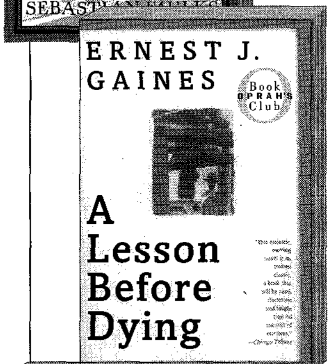
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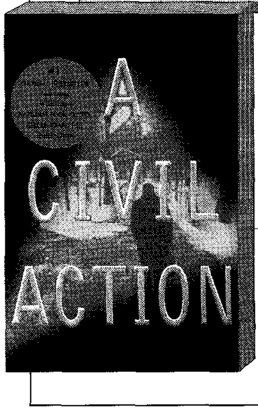
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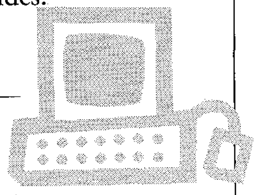

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President and confirmed by the Senate, draws up a list of nominees that includes backup choices. Unofficially, it's understood that they should not send the White House a hot potato. If Clinton had been warned about Rich, he could have opted for the runner-up literary candidate, Philip Roth. But the poet Donald Hall, who proposed his old friend Rich to the council, says, "I nominated Adrienne for her excellence, not because I assumed that she'd be flattered."

The other eleven honorees, who will attend a black-tie dinner at the White House on September 29th, find the whole affair somewhat baffling. "If we were bombing Vietnam right now, I wouldn't take the medal, either," says Agnes Gund, the president of the Museum of Modern Art. "But we're not doing anything like that." Angela Lansbury gives Clinton a B for his arts efforts, but she adds, "I can't think of any Administration since Roosevelt's that was much better." —D. T. MAX

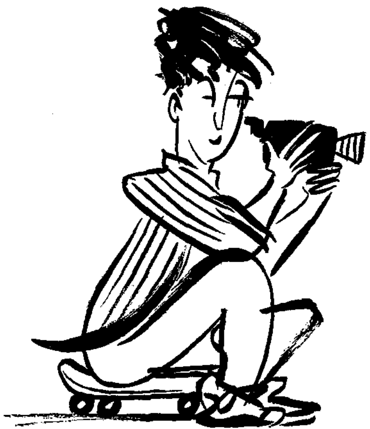
THE CREATIVE LIFE

A brash young filmmaker wants us to suffer for his art.

If we'd been living in Paris in the eighteen-seventies, we would have found Arthur Rimbaud annoying—obnoxious, pretentious, self-righteous, overhyped. A canny teen-age combination of naïf and faux naïf arrives in the metropolis, declares himself a visionary, bad-mouths everyone, and produces perverse images that attract a fanatical following among the stylish. Please.

The Rimbaud analogy may be overgenerous to Harmony Korine, the twenty-three-year-old film director, but it's still apt. After high school, Korine left Nashville for New York to live the groovy low life, and wrote the horrific but interesting cinéma-vérité film "Kids," for Miramax, about brutish teen-agers having sex, getting high, and skateboarding. He promptly became a punk phenom, and now he has directed his own horrific but interesting cinéma-vérité film, "Gummo," which is about brutish teen-agers having sex, getting high, and shooting cats. He has a new one-man show of "Gummo"-like images at a gallery in Santa Monica, and the movie will be released by Fine Line in two weeks. In the spring, Doubleday will publish Korine's first book, "A Crack-Up at the Race Riots," which the catalogue calls "'Slacker' meets James Thurber . . . jokes, half-remembered scenes, dialogue fragments, movie ideas, and suicide notes . . . the ultimate post-modern video novel."

"There's definitely no plot," Korine confirmed. Book, movie, and art exhibit, he says, make up "a unified aesthetic, like Charles Eames or Noguchi." Talking about himself, he can sound like a piece of swinging promo copy, epigrammatic auto-blurbs delivered in real time. "I was a child raised in the movies, raised in the dark," he told me. And, "If Wagner were alive, he'd be making movies."



Harmony Korine

Yes, he is annoying. In an age when characters on a CBS prime-time series can say "asshole," annoyance is probably as close to outrage as anything artists can incite in people who aren't members of the Christian Coalition. It's become almost impossible to *épater les bourgeois.* Korine, however, does his best in "Gummo" to freak out the nice, "Shine"-loving independent-film audience: the dead cats, a retarded girl "playing" a retarded girl, the director appearing as a sloppy drunk who makes a homosexual pass at a half-naked, encephalitic dwarf. And it is pretty much plot-free. The film has already generated a negative-energy shock wave—walkouts at Telluride and animal-rights protests in Venice. Shortly, the disapproval will screech into high gear.

May we preëmptively cut the kid a little slack? Korine may not be Rimbaud (he may not even be Beck), but he's talented and smart and ambitious in the right ways. Korine is a malcontent as young artists were once supposed to be malcontents—not in the disengaged, everything-sucks, nothing-matters fashion but fired up with specific and impolitic impatience at mediocrity and wall-to-wall normality. "I feel nothing in most movies," he says. "I want to feel hatred, disgust, anything but boredom." He doesn't, however, romanticize art-house filmmaking. "Whenever I think of independent films, I just think they're the same as studio films but cheaper, so they look worse."

Some of the attacks on "Gummo" will be heartfelt disgust; the scenes with the retarded girl are appalling. But a lot will be envy, since Korine has managed, like so many rebels these days, to have it both ways—he's a radical with a studio distribution deal and a besotted big-time producer, Cary Woods, who told me, "I hope to produce every movie he ever makes." The antagonism will also derive from a kind of young-fogey complacency, the risk-averseness of the formerly hip. The generation that came of age impudent and self-righteous in the sixties and seventies cannot now, in middle age, abide youthful hubris or fuck-you candor of the kind that Korine embodies. Baby boomers dismiss new pop reflexively as either too familiar and thus derivative (Oasis is the Beatles, Korine is an MTV Werner Herzog) or too unfamiliar and unpleasant to qualify as entertainment at all (rap, "Gummo"). When today's former youths were young, the three-Martini-lunch ethos of their parents and their own counterculturalism made it cool to loaf at work, but strenuousness in pursuit of culture was obligatory—you had to suffer a little to read Burroughs or watch Fassbinder. Now that polarity has reversed: today, the hours of virtuous pain are expected to be spent on the job, and hardly anybody has an appetite for difficult art.

When Korine says, "It's time for people to start seeing films differently," one is tempted to think of Stan Brakhage in 1964 or Robert Altman in 1975, and snort. But the snort and the sneer can become bad habits. When Korine describes his negotiations with the movie-rating board over "Gummo"—"They objected to realism! They said they would give it an NC-17 for *nihilism!*"—he certainly seems like an artist fighting the good fight. As he, annoyingly, told me in just those words.

—KURT ANDERSEN

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THE PUBLISHING WORLD

THE IMPOSSIBLE BUSINESS

Since Gutenberg, publishing has been in crisis. The current crisis might be its most serious. And the outcome might change the business forever.

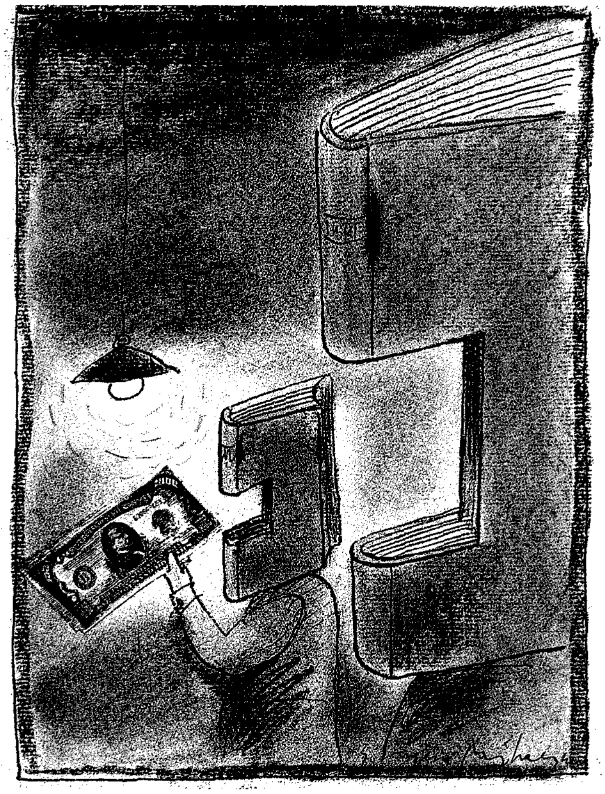
BY KEN AULETTA

I—HOUSES FOR SALE?

TWO things have always been true about the book-publishing world: everyone who is in it loves to complain about it, and there is always someone, somewhere, who wants to get into it. Since the time when the book industry started describing itself as an "industry," it has been in a state of "crisis." And yet, whatever the crisis, there have always been people prepared not only to buy books but to buy more books than anyone had ever bought before. And, whatever the crisis, there has always been someone—a speculator, a corporation with a cultural vision, a man with more money than sense—who wanted a piece of it. Sixty years ago, alarm arose over the advent of paperbacks—those perishable reprints that looked certain to undermine the august hardback book. Twenty years ago, book people were alarmed by what they saw in the shopping malls—a seemingly unstoppable onslaught of bookstore chains that, like supermarkets in the food business, looked certain to crush the small, independent stores that the publishers of first novels and literary biographies and belles-lettres depended on. Nevertheless, first novels, literary biographies, and belles-lettres continue to be written and published. Michael Korda, the editor-in-chief of Simon & Schuster, suggests that one feature of this peculiar business is that it always believes it's about to collapse: "I've been in publishing for nearly forty years, and in that time people have always behaved as if the sky were about to fall. The sky was about to fall because of television. The sky was about to fall because of discounting books. The sky was about to fall because of conglomerates. The sky was about to fall because of agents. The sky hasn't fallen."

It hasn't fallen, but has it, perhaps, grown menacingly darker? People in the adult-trade-publishing industry are again talking about a crisis, but this one seems different from the crises of any other period in modern book publishing. Today people seem to be losing interest in the business itself—or, at least, in the business as we've known it.

The most recent annual industry data from the Association of American Publishers show that the number of adult trade hardcover books being bought, together with the amount of money spent on them, has declined for two years in a row, with hardcover sales falling almost ten per cent. To be sure, there have been other years in which book buying has dipped. But this is the first time in decades that there has been a sustained drop. Perhaps the decline is cyclical, but, if so, it is occurring at an unusual point in the cycle: the economy is buoyant, and other retail enterprises are benefitting from increased spending by newly confident consumers. And the decline reinforces a perception that has grown more widespread: that publishing, as a business, is less rewarding and less satisfying than ever before.



EUGÈNE MIHAESCO

Publishing has always been run by the underpaid and the overqualified; it is a business whose overhead has been indirectly subsidized by bright people prepared to accept low salaries simply because they want to be involved with books. Or it used to be that way. According to Ann Godoff, the editor-in-chief of adult trade publications at Random House, it's more difficult to hire these people than it was ten or fifteen years ago. A starting editor's salary is not much more than that of a clerk-typist. The people who once filled these positions appear to be taking their creative talents elsewhere.

The evidence is more than anecdotal. In the past year, two publishing houses, Simon & Schuster and HarperCollins, have explored a sale. In the fall of 1993, William Morrow & Company and Avon Books were put up for sale by the Hearst Corporation, and then, many months later, when no one came forth with a substantial bid, the sale offer was withdrawn. For the first time that anyone in the industry can remember, no one is buying.

Simon & Schuster is owned by the media conglomerate Viacom. With a current ten-billion-dollar debt, and with its stock price sagging, Viacom might be prepared to unload its publishing company—if it could get a good price for it. "We're obviously listening," a senior Viacom executive admits. But when Viacom's two deputy chairmen, Thomas E. Dooley and Philippe P. Dauman, met with some of their bankers from Bear Stearns last winter, they were presented with an analysis of what their publishing company might fetch. For a sale to make sense, according to one company insider, Simon & Schuster would have to be bought for a large enough figure so that Viacom could cover the taxes it would owe (about forty per cent of the purchase price) and "pay down the bank debt" that the publishing house had built up. Simon & Schuster may be, as Richard E. Snyder, its former president and chairman, says, "a magnificent asset," but an investment banker who had been consulted about a

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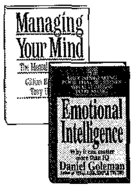

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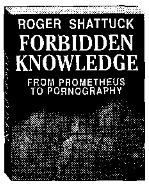

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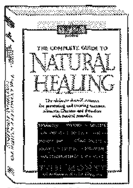

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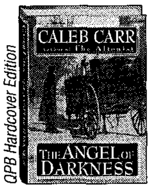

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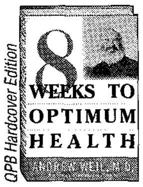

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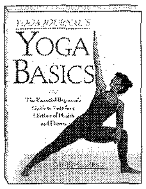

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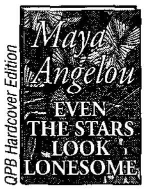

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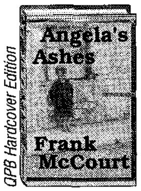

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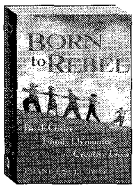

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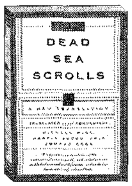

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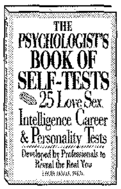

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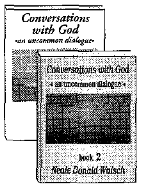

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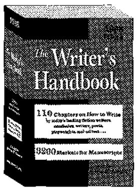

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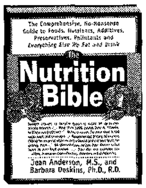

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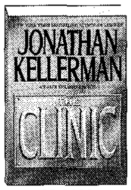

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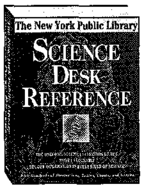

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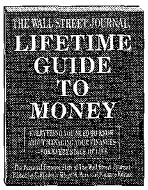

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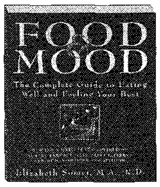

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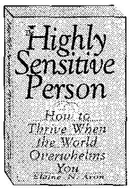

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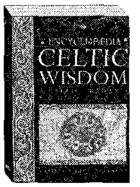

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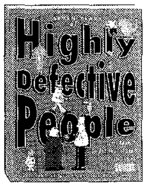

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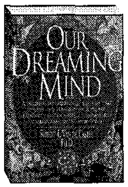

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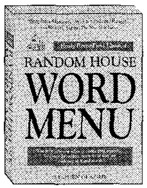

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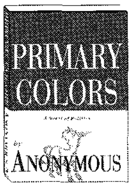

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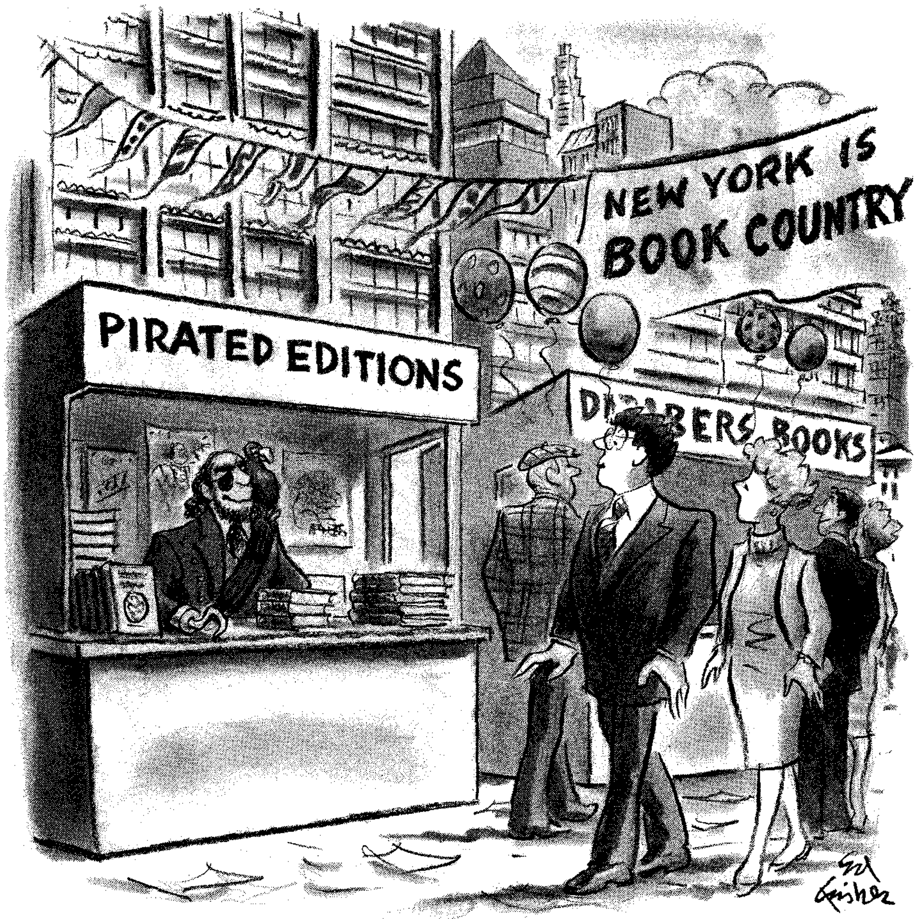

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similar sale described the difficulty: "Trade-book publishing is a lousy business at the moment, and there is no prospect of its improving. There's nobody to sell to. You might find a cash buyer for a smaller publisher. The big ones are unsalable for cash." Simon & Schuster, at least temporarily, is not for sale.

HarperCollins, which is owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, is one of America's biggest and most venerable trade publishers. Last June, it made the front page of the *Times* when it cancelled a hundred and six contracts with authors. In August, it made history when it announced a write-off of losses amounting to two hundred and seventy million dollars—the largest known write-off in English-language publishing. HarperCollins has become a burden to its owner, and for some time Murdoch—looking for a way either to be free of the company entirely or, at least, to lighten his financial load—has been said to be secretly exploring the idea of a sale. He has also been looking at another radical option: a merger with another publisher.

Echoing the message of bankers and accountants, Michael Korda dismisses the prospect of a sale. "I don't think anyone will buy HarperCollins. Maybe one of the Germans. It's their revenge for the Second World War." According to Korda, the only parties interested in American publishing seem to be the Germans—or, at any rate, two German-based companies: Bertelsmann A.G. and the media group owned by Germany's Von Holtzbrinck family. Bertelsmann A.G., which is the world's third-largest media company, has had a presence in the United States for some time. It owns Bantam Doubleday Dell, which includes at least a dozen imprints and twelve direct-market book clubs, the Literary Guild among them. Peter Olson, the chairman of Bertelsmann's North American book operations, makes no secret of the company's wish to acquire an established publishing house—for the reason that such publishing houses have often been bought by Bertelsmann's rivals—to expand its backlist and increase its market share. "We will continue to explore opportunities for acquisition," he says. But discussions between Olson's and Murdoch's representatives are reported to have stalled over price.

In Germany, the Von Holtzbrinck family has extensive holdings in book publishing, television, radio, and newspapers. Since the mid-nineteen-eighties, it has made three dramatic purchases: the British-based Macmillan Company (with its American division, St. Martin's Press) and two houses in the United States—Henry Holt & Company and Farrar, Straus & Giroux. For the time being, Michael Naumann, who is the president of Henry Holt, and is the Von Holtzbrincks' representative in the United States, says, "we just want to consolidate." The same is true of a third potential buyer, the British-based Pearson P.L.C., which has twenty-three imprints under the Penguin Group, including Viking Penguin and Putnam Berkley. But, since it bought the Putnam Berkley Group for three hundred and thirty-six million dollars last year, Phyllis E. Grann, the president of the newly combined Penguin Putnam, says, "I don't believe anyone at Putnam or Penguin could deal with a huge acquisition in 1997 or the first half of 1998."

Murdoch, who sees himself as a liberator of the media from élitism, has broached the subject of a sale with a nontraditional buyer—Leonard Riggio, the chief executive officer of Barnes & Noble, who, for his part, sees himself as a populist opening the windows of a stuffy publishing world. "I would love to liberate publishing," he told me. Murdoch and Riggio have agreed to meet in New York soon. ("I would buy that company," Riggio has told colleagues, while conceding that such a move is unlikely.) Such a transaction would have extraordinary consequences. Barnes & Noble is the nation's largest book retailer, with four hundred and fifty-five superstores, five hundred and fifty-six mall stores, and annual sales of almost two and a half billion dollars. If Barnes & Noble bought a big publisher, would other publishers view it as a rival and refuse to sell it books? Would the books published by Barnes & Noble get preferential treatment—window displays and prominent shelving? Or would the whole enterprise—uniting a giant bookstore with a giant publishing house—merit investigation as a vertical monopoly, of the kind that oil companies once enjoyed when they controlled both the production of their product and its sale?

A further option would be for Murdoch to merge with another giant publishing house, thereby consolidating staff and warehouses and various functions. Ei-

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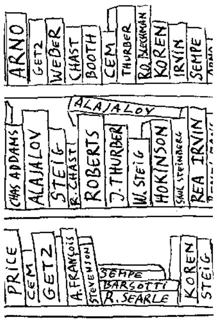
ther option—selling to a bookstore chain or merging with a rival—would profoundly alter American book publishing.

PUBLISHERS are in the business of selling stories, and in the vernacular of Wall Street publishing is known as a content business. Its product is entertainment, information, narrative. And it is ironic that book publishing is having such problems when other content businesses—music, newspapers, television, radio, software—are for the most part doing exceptionally well. Most content businesses expect to make profits of at least fifteen to twenty per cent, but publishing has never seen returns of that size.



When I interviewed Anthea Disney, whom Murdoch appointed in March of 1996 to run HarperCollins and who last week was promoted to chairman of the News America Publishing Group, she was in a rage. She had recently read the lead story in last spring's special issue of *The Nation*. Entitled "The Crushing Power of Big Publishing," it alleges that corporate publishing, by expecting profit returns of twelve to fifteen per cent, was ruining the industry. "When I read that Rupert Murdoch and other so-called vulgarians want to make fifteen per cent, I cry," she said. "If we could make eight per cent, I'd be Queen of the May." Last year, HarperCollins had a small profit, of twelve million dollars. Murdoch announced again last week that he had no intention of selling it.

Alberto Vitale, the chairman and C.E.O. of Random House, Inc., which is owned by the Newhouse family (as is *The New Yorker*), says, "I don't make any profit here. We're not losing money, but we're not making money commensurate with the effort. We are in the single-digit profit margins. . . . Everyone in trade publishing is hurting."

Michael Naumann, who runs Henry Holt, for ten years ran the German publishing operation Rowohlt, which is another Von Holtzbrinck property. Naumann, who is himself German, told me in July, "The truth is that one of the few publishers in this town who can say he made a profit last year is Larry Kirshbaum." Kirshbaum is the chairman of Time Warner trade publishing, which includes Little, Brown and Warner Books, and for some years he has published one celebrity book after another. He promoted a flyspeck novel, "The Bridges of Madison County," into an epic that sold close to six million hardcover copies, and has just brought out Kitty Kelley's new book on England's Royal Family. "Almost everybody else either is doing some creative accounting or has made a small profit, but it's not going to be a profit worth writing home about," Naumann said.

Naumann conceded that Henry Holt was not profitable last year. Sources at Simon & Schuster, Bantam Doubleday Dell, and Penguin Putnam maintain that their companies generate profits of about ten per cent, but the Seagram Company, Ltd., which had owned the Putnam Berkley Group, and placed it under its Universal Studios, got out of the book business because there was no likelihood of comfortable double-digit growth. The Universal Studios C.E.O., Frank Biondi, Jr., says, "It was perceived to be the lowest-growth cyclical business we were in. It had all the characteristics of the movie business, but it didn't have a foreign market." So Seagram's allowed Phyllis Grann to shop around for a Putnam Berkley buyer. After a long search, Biondi notes, Pearson P.L.C. was the only buyer to surface.

In the past, modest, or even nonexistent, profits didn't seem to affect the value of the companies themselves. Publishing was always about more than money: there was the sentimental appeal, the pride of producing something permanent, something important to the culture—a book. The profit history of Farrar, Straus & Giroux had been spotty at best when Von Holtzbrinck bought a majority interest in it. But Farrar, Straus was the publisher of twenty winners of the Nobel Prize in Literature. Farrar, Straus was more than a business: it was a bit of the culture.

The acquisition frenzy for book houses began in the nineteen-seventies, when large communications corporations, driven by illusions of media "synergy," suddenly felt that they needed a publishing company, to "become more vertically integrated." (Thomas Whiteside's three-part report on publishing, which appeared in *The New Yorker* in 1980, described this phenomenon, as well as many of the ailments that appear to be affecting publishing today.) An enormous number of acquisitions followed in the eighties. What makes the current crisis in adult-trade-book publishing remarkable is this: For the first time, publishing companies are being looked at simply for the money they make. And they don't look good—certainly not when they are compared with other companies in the content business.

II—MAKING BOOKS

THE business starts with the book, which involves seven basic costs, and the first of those is manufacturing. The cost of printing and binding one copy of an average-length twenty-five-dollar hardcover book is about a tenth of its cover price, or two dollars and fifty cents.

Another cost is distribution, which averages about eight per cent of the book's cover price—two dollars. A third cost is marketing, including coöperative advertising in stores, and it adds about seven and a half per cent, or a dollar and seventy-five cents. A fourth cost, overhead—which includes salaries, rent, and the cost of doing business—adds eight per cent more.

The fifth cost, the author's share, is more complicated. When an author signs a book contract, the publisher pays him or her a sum of money as an advance against the royalties the book is expected to earn. (Royalties usually start at ten per cent of a book's cover price and increase to fifteen per cent after the first ten thousand copies are sold.) So even before this twenty-five-dollar volume has been put on a bookstore shelf, the publishing house has already spent about eleven dollars against its purchase price.

Retail stores receive an average discount of forty to forty-seven per cent from the publisher, depending mostly on the number of books ordered; wholesalers, like the Ingram Book Company and Baker & Taylor, who act as middlemen and buy between thirty-five and forty per cent of all books, receive a slightly higher discount—usually forty-nine or fifty per cent. Thus the publisher sells the twenty-five-dollar book for nearly half the cover price, or twelve dollars and twenty-five cents. This leaves the publisher with about a dollar seventy-five on each copy sold, but the final reckoning is still not in. From that amount a publisher deducts yet another expense, and the hardest to predict: returns from bookstores.

In a publisher's dream world, in which everything works—in which paperback and foreign rights are sold and returns are low—a book should be able to make an immediate profit of six per cent or so. And sometimes a book does much better, as in the case of the current No. 1 best-selling nonfiction and fiction books in America, according to the *Times* best-seller list. Both are exceptional literary titles: Frank McCourt's "Angela's Ashes," which has been on the nonfiction list for fifty-three weeks; and Charles Frazier's Civil War novel, "Cold Mountain," which appeared on the list about three months ago. Each is the author's first book. "Angela's Ashes" is the product of a large publishing house, Simon & Schuster (under its Scribner imprint), which had shipped a million six hundred thousand copies of the book by the end of September; "Cold Mountain" is published by Grove/Atlantic, one of a number of new independent houses, which has so far shipped around six hundred and sixty thousand copies of Frazier's novel.

McCourt's advance, according to a senior executive at Simon & Schuster, was a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars; the initial print run of twenty-seven thousand five hundred copies reflected a supposition that the title would do reasonably well but not catch fire. Frazier, whose novel was given an initial printing of twenty-five thousand copies, received a hundred-thousand-dollar advance, a senior executive at his publisher says. Since Grove/Atlantic, unlike Simon & Schuster, owned foreign rights, the company earned that back by preselling the book in England, France, and Germany. Morgan Entrekin, Grove/Atlantic's publisher, sold paperback rights to Vintage for three hundred thousand dollars, with half going to the author.

These were, in many respects, typical "mid-list" books. Mid-list books are often the most difficult ones to make any money on, for they will never have the marketing that a best-seller enjoys. But the royalties from sales of both of these titles far exceeded the advances paid to the authors, which, in the idiom of the business, had "earned out" within weeks of publication. And since both books are selling well, neither publisher is likely to be cursed with high returns.

WITH a successful book, every one of the costs is generally reduced. On most of the million six hundred thousand copies of "Angela's Ashes," McCourt will earn about fifteen per cent of the current list price, twenty-five dollars, or close to six million dollars, and Simon & Schuster will earn more than three million dollars. (The publisher will also receive six hundred thousand dollars for its share of the paperback sale, but will receive nothing from McCourt's $1.25-million movie deal or his sale of foreign rights.) If six hundred and sixty thousand copies of "Cold Mountain" are sold, Frazier will pocket about two and a half million dollars. Grove/Atlantic, which has since sold the book in fourteen countries, stands to make between two and three million dollars in the United States alone.

For most publishers, such success is rare. "Cold Mountain" is Morgan Entrekin's first No. 1 best-selling novel. The McCourt memoir, bought by Nan Graham, the editor-in-chief of Scribners, was her first No. 1 best-seller, too. Both editors have been in publishing for about twenty years. Wondrous as this kind of success is, the net profits on a blockbuster book do not nearly match the profits on a blockbuster movie. Only eleven hardcover books

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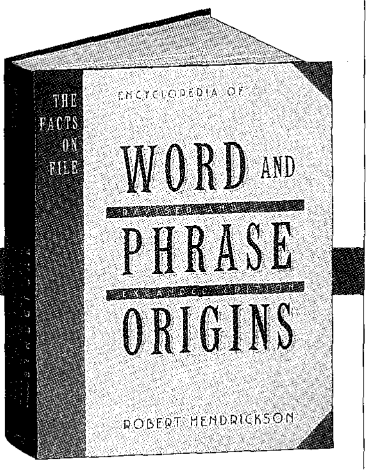

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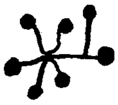
sold more than a million copies in 1996.

Typically, the costs of making a book turn out to be much higher and far less predictable. And it is sometimes difficult to resist the temptation to order a print run based on a publisher's hopes. For example, HarperCollins, which paid more than four million dollars for Jay Leno's "Leading with My Chin," printed six hundred thousand copies and had four hundred thousand returned, according to executives there. Anthea Disney, who inherited Leno's book at HarperCollins, describes publishing as a business whose "fundamental flaw is this war between what the business used to be and people would like it to be, and the way the business is." She explains, "You have these hungry publishers hungry for a hit, and these agents selling their books. The frenzy starts with the property and the agent. Then the publishers spend too much. Then they go through a period of buyer's remorse. Then the manuscript comes in and you have marketing meetings. Then your reps sell to the stores. It's very hard to say at that point, 'Do we really need that many copies out there?' It's a very emotional business. You're not selling Nike. You are falling in love with properties." If a publisher prints twenty thousand copies more than the marketplace can bear, the manufacturing cost alone could exceed fifty thousand dollars. It is not a business for those with a slide rule.

High advances are regarded as one of the most punishing expenses of publishing. Much like overlarge printings, huge advances sometimes reflect emotion rather than reason. But there are also sound financial reasons for them: publishers need some big books to meet the most basic needs of their businesses. A title that sells half a million copies, even if it doesn't earn back its advance, is generating a couple of million dollars in revenue that goes straight to paying the overhead. One can see the craving for such titles in some recent celebrated failures: the more than four million dollars that Viking Penguin reportedly paid Marcia Clark for her account of the O. J. Simpson trial and the estimated three million dollars that Ballantine paid Simpson's attorney Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr.

The consequences of such extravagance can make for some startling numbers. Simon & Schuster, according to a Viacom executive, wrote off about thirty-five million dollars' worth of unearned advances in 1996. Random House, Inc., which has thirty-five imprints in the United States, including Alfred A. Knopf and Crown Books, wrote off "well in excess of fifty million dollars," according to someone in a position to know; two other people told me that the figure is closer to eighty million. Penguin Putnam, according to a senior executive there, wrote off unearned advances of about twenty million dollars.

And, again, there is the problem of returns. Alberto Vitale, at Random House, says flatly, "The biggest costs are returns and advances. Everything else is a piece of cake. If a company has a billion dollars in sales, every point reduction in returns adds ten million dollars to the bottom line."



The returns policy started during the Great Depression, and was used to entice booksellers to carry more titles than they could afford to at the time. The policy gives a bookseller ninety days, and often longer, to return any unsold copies of a book that was ordered. But the books, once returned, cannot easily be resold: most have been damaged in transit or in handling, or are simply shop-soiled. Most returns are pulped, recycled into paper, or sold at fire-sale prices to remainder outlets.

For independent booksellers, returns have never been much of a problem. Katharine Thalberg is a good example. A handsome gray-haired woman who is the daughter of the Hollywood legends Irving Thalberg and Norma Shearer, she has owned the Explorer Booksellers & Bistro in Aspen, Colorado, since 1974. She carries an unusually large inventory for an independent bookseller—fifty-five thousand titles. She stays open until ten in the evening, sells jazz and classical CDs and cassettes, throws logs on the fire in winter, serves hot vegetarian meals, and has given her bookstore the feeling of a living room or a study in one's home in the mountains. "We like to think we help people find books," she told me after lunch in her office at four in the afternoon. "We provide the whimsical and the eccentric setting that offers choice in buying. This is a locally owned business that is part of the community. We know the people and what they like to read." She can't afford to offer the same discounts that chains do, and her profit margin is a modest two per cent. ("It's a lousy business," she says.) But she also sells a much higher percentage—eighty-eight per cent—of the books she orders. The average independent bookstore returns about twenty per cent of its books, according to Open Book Publishing, which tracks the book-publishing business.

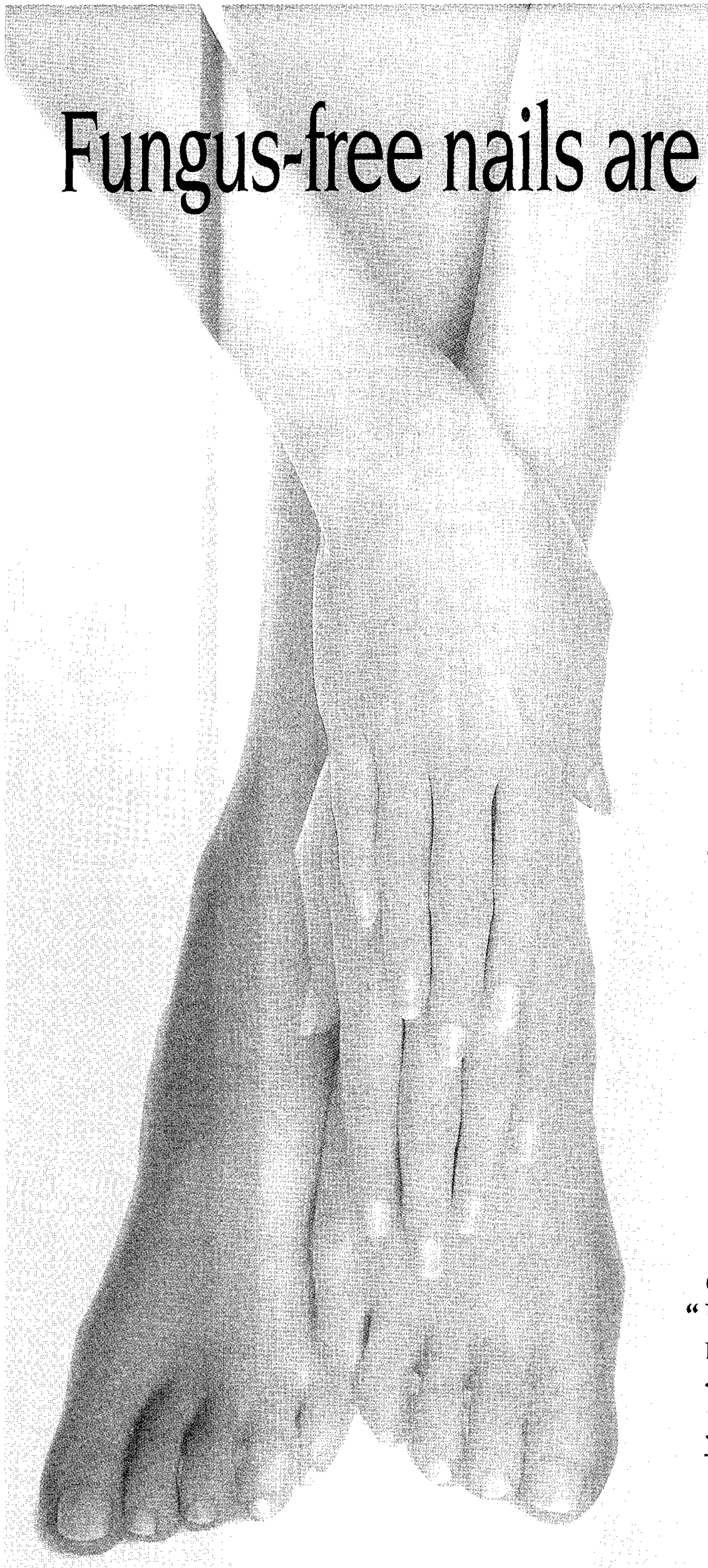
Chains like Barnes & Noble, Open Book reports, have returns of about thirty per cent, which is still less than the industry average. Last year, a record thirty-five

PSALM

God of paper and writing, God of first and last drafts,
God of dislikes, God of everyday occasions—
He is not my servant, does not work for tips.
Under the dome of the Roman Pantheon,
God in three persons carries a cross on his back
as an aging centaur, hands bound behind his back, carries Eros.
Chinese God of examinations: bloodwork, biopsy,
urine analysis, grant me the grade of *fair* in the study of dark holes,
fair in anus, self-knowledge, and the leaves of the vagina
like the pages of a book in the vision of Ezekiel.
May I also open my mouth and read the book by eating it,
swallow its meaning. My Shepherd, let me continue to just *pass*
in the army of the living, keep me from the ranks of the *excellent* dead.
It's true I worshipped Aphrodite,
who has driven me off with her slipper
after my worst ways pleased her.
I make noise for the Lord.
My Shepherd, I want, I want, I want.

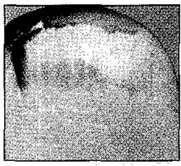
—Stanley Moss

Fungus-free nails are a bare necessity.



Gorgeous feet have gorgeous nails. Healthy. Clear. Perfect.

But if you've noticed your nails are turning colors (like white or yellow or brown) *and* they're getting thick or brittle or flaky, you've probably got what millions of people have: fungus-ridden nails.



Nail with advanced fungal infection

So go for effective help from the *inside out* with oral Lamisil Tablets. Oral Lamisil works by attacking the fungus right where it lives: deep *inside,* under the nail at the base.

After taking oral Lamisil for 12 weeks, clearer, healthier toenails often grow in for many people. Because nails naturally grow slowly, it takes about 10 months for you to see totally new nails.

Prescription Lamisil may have some side effects for some people. In clinical studies, the most commonly reported were headache and gastrointestinal upset. In rare instances, adverse effects on the liver and serious skin reactions were reported, and therapy was discontinued. However, Lamisil is well tolerated by most people.

Call now to get your free, informative video, "Uncovering the Inside Story on Nail Fungus," plus a brochure on nail care and treatments.

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Lamisil® *Tablets*

(terbinafine HCl tablets) 250mg

The ultimate pedicure happens from the inside out

Please see patient information on the adjacent page.

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LMT-0796-B

PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT LAMISIL® TABLETS

Generic name: terbinafine (tur-bin-uh-feen)

Please read this as well as any other information your doctor gives you about LAMISIL® (terbinafine HCl tablets) Tablets and fungal infections of the toenail or fingernail. Only a doctor or other qualified healthcare professional has the training necessary to determine if LAMISIL Tablets are right for you.

What are LAMISIL Tablets?

LAMISIL Tablets are a prescription medicine for the treatment of onychomycosis (on-ee-ko-mi-ko-sis).

What is onychomycosis?

Onychomycosis is a fungal infection of fingernails or toenails. Because the fungus infects the area underneath the nail and in the place where the nail forms, it can be very stubborn and difficult to cure. The infection may cause some or all of the following: the nail can turn colors like white, yellow or brown, and become thickened and brittle. Additionally, it may be painful for some people.

How do LAMISIL Tablets work?

When you take LAMISIL Tablets, the active ingredient, terbinafine, travels to the infected area under the toenail or fingernail. Because terbinafine accumulates and lingers in the area of the nail that is growing, it can continue to work for months even after your prescription is finished, allowing the nail to heal naturally over a period of time.

How to take LAMISIL Tablets

Patients take one 250 mg tablet per day (it may be taken with or without food). You should follow your doctor's advice on how to take LAMISIL Tablets. Be sure to take the complete course of your medicine. For toenail infections, treatment time is 12 weeks. For fingernail infections, treatment time is 6 weeks. It is important to note that the complete healing process often takes at least 10 to 12 months for toenails and 4 months for fingernails. This is due to the length of time it takes for the new nails to grow in.

Who should not take LAMISIL Tablets

LAMISIL Tablets should not be taken by anyone allergic to any of its ingredients.

You should be aware of these warnings and precautions when taking LAMISIL Tablets

- As with all medications, you should discuss any side effects you experience with your doctor or healthcare professional.
- Rare instances of serious liver problems or skin reactions have been reported in patients using LAMISIL Tablets. In such cases, treatment with LAMISIL should be discontinued. Your doctor may ask you to undergo tests before and during treatment with LAMISIL Tablets.
- In clinical studies, 0.9% of patients taking LAMISIL Tablets discontinued therapy because of a skin rash. In rare cases, these skin reactions could indicate a serious side effect. If you notice a rash, stop taking LAMISIL and call your doctor.
- Isolated cases of decreases in white blood cell count have been reported. In all of the reported cases to date, these have been reversible.
- Patients with liver disease or kidney problems should not take LAMISIL Tablets.
- If you have problems with your immune system, your doctor may need to monitor your white blood cell count carefully if you take LAMISIL Tablets for more than 6 weeks. In some cases, LAMISIL therapy may need to be discontinued.
- Changes in the retina and lens of the eye have been reported following the use of LAMISIL. The significance of these changes is not known. In clinical studies, 0.9% of patients discontinued taking LAMISIL because of visual disturbances.
- The tumor-causing potential of LAMISIL has been examined in numerous studies in mice, rats, dogs, and monkeys. Male rats, given a daily dosage approximately 13.8 times the maximum recommended human dose based on body weight, showed a marginal increase in the incidence of liver tumors. No increase in tumors was noted in a wide range of studies in mice, dogs, and monkeys. These tests suggest that this is a finding specific to rats.
- No studies with pregnant women have been done to evaluate the safety of LAMISIL Tablets. Because treatment of onychomycosis can be delayed until after pregnancy is completed, LAMISIL Tablets should not be taken by pregnant women.
- The active ingredient of LAMISIL Tablets, terbinafine, is present in the breast milk of nursing mothers. Therefore, LAMISIL Tablets should not be taken by nursing mothers.
- No studies have been done in children to evaluate the safety of LAMISIL Tablets.
- Talk to your doctor or healthcare professional before combining LAMISIL Tablets with any other medications. Certain medications, including Tagamet®,[*] Seldane®,[†] and rifampin may affect the rate at which LAMISIL is eliminated from the body. However, unlike some other antifungal medications, LAMISIL Tablets has been used safely with many commonly prescribed medications, such as Seldane®, Lanoxin®,[‡] or Coumadin®[§].

Possible side effects

Most patients tolerate treatment with LAMISIL Tablets very well. However, like all prescription drugs, LAMISIL Tablets may cause some side effects in some people. These side effects, as determined by three clinical studies, were mild and in general did not lead to discontinuation of treatment with LAMISIL Tablets. The most commonly reported side effects were headache, which occurred in 12.9% of patients, gastrointestinal symptoms, including diarrhea (5.6%), upset stomach (4.3%), taste disturbances (2.8%), nausea (2.6%), abdominal pain (2.4%), flatulence (2.2%), rash (5.6%), itching (2.8%), hives (1.1%), and abnormalities in laboratory tests of liver enzymes (3.3%). In some cases, these complaints were no more frequent than in patients taking placebo (sugar pill).

LAMISIL Tablets were prescribed only for you. Do not share LAMISIL Tablets with anyone else. Keep LAMISIL Tablets and all other medications away from children. For more information about LAMISIL Tablets and fingernail or toenail fungal infections, talk to your doctor or other healthcare professional.

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[*] Tagamet (cimetidine) is a registered trademark of SmithKline Beecham Pharmaceuticals.

[†] Seldane (terfenadine) is a registered trademark of Hoechst Marion Roussel, Inc.

[‡] Lanoxin (digoxin) is a registered trademark of Glaxo Wellcome Inc.

[§] Coumadin (warfarin) is a registered trademark of DuPont Pharma.

NOVARTIS

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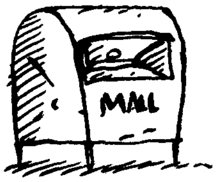
April 1997

per cent of all published adult trade hardbound books were returned unsold. The waste implicit in such a figure is extravagant beyond imagining. The publisher hoping to launch a best-seller can assume a minimum print run of, say, a hundred thousand copies. Of those, thirty-five thousand copies, after being printed, bound, and shipped, are then packed up and sent back.

Jane Friedman, the executive vice-president of Knopf, believes that the returns policy could be "the demise of the industry." She says that it may be time to consider a book business without returns. Such a proposal infuriates bookstores, because it assumes they are to blame for large returns; they blame publishers for printing too many books. Friedman suggests, "You could do it by offering a higher discount on nonreturnables, and that would put the burden on both the publisher and the retailer. Let's suppose that Doubleday wanted to publish John Grisham under a nonreturnable policy. Do you think a bookstore wouldn't buy Grisham if there were a nonreturnable policy? It would have to buy Grisham. The question is which publisher is going to be nervy enough to do it first."



III—THE FUTURE OF THE BOOK

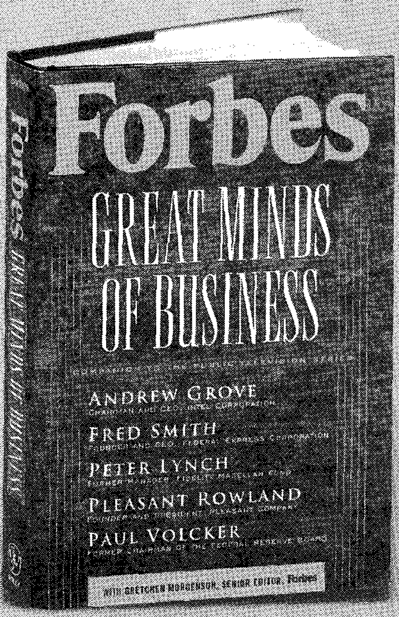
In an earlier age, publishers' representatives visited bookstores with a stack of preprinted covers of the books that would appear the next season. Now, with more outlets dominated by the chains, most orders are placed not in shops but in a chain or discount store's central office, where buying is concentrated within a relatively small group. Barnes & Noble, for instance, has thirty-five central buyers, and they work out of its headquarters, on lower Fifth Avenue. The buyers not only order the books for each Barnes & Noble store but also decide on the number of each book for each store. Local stores are able to reorder on their own, but the purchase must come from their own budgets. A buyer's initial decision, I was told, is usually based in large part not just on the author's reputation but on what the buyer has heard about a book—especially the prospective print run, the advertising budget, and the "buzz" that editors try to generate.

To create this buzz, marketing has come to influence publishing decisions in ways that would once have been inconceivable. Many houses now have procedures to insure that before editors buy a new title they review a profit-and-loss statement of the author's previous work and consult the sales and marketing departments to weigh what the realistic sales possibilities are. The chains have used their leverage to push publishers into paying what translates into an average of about fifty cents per title for coöperative advertising, for placing stacks of books in the superstore, for authors' signings, for window displays of a book, and for letting the book be shown face out on shelves.

The percentage of books taken by the bookseller varies enormously, and this is because fewer are being sold to conventional bookstores. In 1991, nearly a third of all consumer adult titles were sold in independent bookstores, but in the last six years that figure has plunged. Today, a mere 18.6 per cent are sold in the bookstores that were once the sentimental, if not the financial, heart of the industry—a figure equal to the number sold through book clubs. Today, nearly a quarter of all books are sold through superstore chains like Barnes & Noble and the Borders Group, and these outlets account for about forty per cent of adult hardcover trade books.

Morgan Entrekin, at Grove/Atlantic, praises the development of the superstores, which, in their drive for growth, keep opening new outlets, often "in communities that never had bookstores before," and which carry many more titles than any of the smaller shops, thereby giving extra life to backlisted books. It is an article of faith within the publishing colony that the chains shrink the market for mid-list books by selling only best-sellers, yet Barnes & Noble's Riggio let me see an internal document showing that the *Times* hardcover best-sellers represented only 2.9 per cent of all books the chain sold in August, 1997, and that fifty-nine per cent of all trade books sold in Barnes & Noble were backlisted books (titles published at least twelve months earlier); in August, backlisted books accounted for fifty-three per cent of the chain's dollar book sales.

"But the problem with these new big chain stores is that they have a very different retail environment," Entrekin says. "It's the difference between a Home Depot and a ma-and-pa hardware store. . . . It has never been easy selling the smaller books—serious nonfiction, serious fiction, literature in translation—but in the big-



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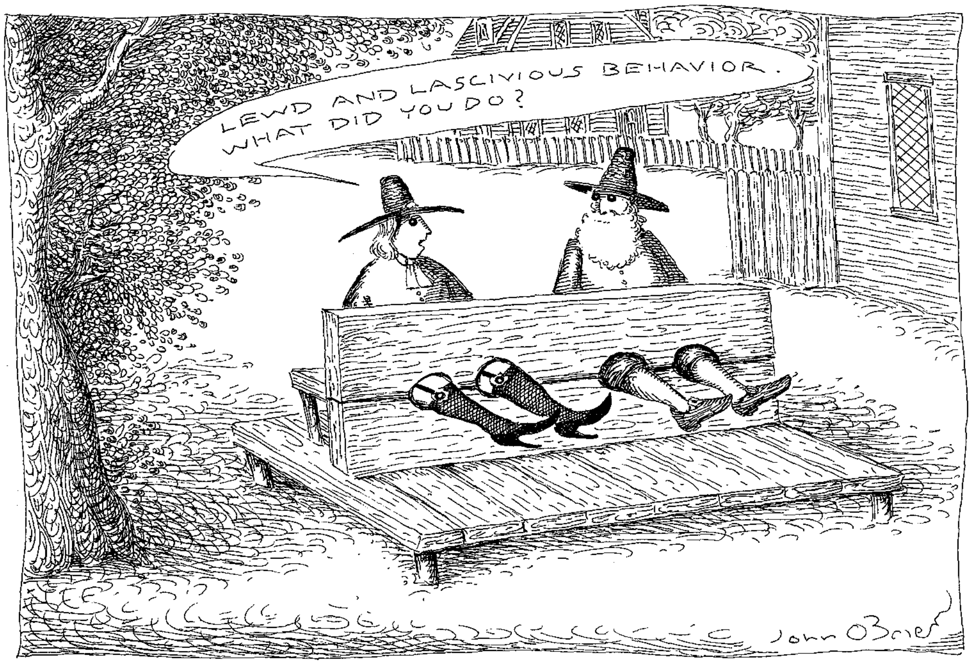
WILEY
TRADE PUBLISHING

ger, more impersonal environment of the superstores it's even more difficult."

A recent study by Open Book Publishing found that independent stores spend roughly twice as much on their sales staff as the superstores—that, while the superstores offer more books, the independents offer more people to talk to. But among the most overlooked stories in publishing is this startling fact: the majority of all books purchased—fifty-three per cent—are sold through discount stores, such as Wal-Mart and K mart, and price clubs and drugstores and other non-bookstore outlets. The percentage is not so high when it's limited to the category of adult trade books, but such outlets, along with airport stores and supermarkets and coffee shops, account for a disproportionate percentage of best-seller turnover. Jack Hoeft, the president and C.E.O. of Bantam Doubleday Dell, reports that a third of his best-sellers are sold in discount stores. Inevitably, this transformation in bookselling affects what is published.

SCOTT TUROW tells the story of his grandfather who, just off the boat and waiting in line at Ellis Island, heard someone predict that one day chocolate would be sold in wrapping: "My grandfather said, 'People will never buy chocolate except off a pushcart!' " Turow, who is a best-selling author, recalls the story to illustrate just how unpredictable the future of the book could be. Are people indeed wedded to paper and bookstores as Turow's grandfather was to pushcarts? "I think the Internet or some other alternative technology could dramatically change publishing," Turow says. "If Stephen King or John Grisham posted a book on the Net and came up with an appropriate technology that allowed him to be compensated, what the hell would he need a publisher for?"

Quite apart from the Internet, it is likely that technology will bring profound changes to publishing. It will certainly shorten the regular six-to-nine-month lead time for publication of a book. "Magazines and book publishing are bumping into each other," Jonathan Newcomb, the president and C.E.O. of Simon & Schuster, says. "We can publish a book as quickly as a magazine." Electronic publishing could also allow authors to do their own publishing, and that would not be good news for publishers. For big authors, the publishing house is a bank and a distributor. "If Stephen King, John Grisham, and Michael Crichton got together, they'd become one of the top three publishers overnight," Morgan Entrekin observes. Their advantage would be that they could take a large part of the profits publishers get. The disadvantage would be that they would have to hire editors and marketers and graphic artists, and arrange for distribution. "I can't speak for John Grisham," Peter Olson, who publishes him, says. "But I, personally, don't think that these synergies would work. I wonder whether a writer would want to spend his time managing a business rather than writing." He adds, laughing, "We could ask another question: Why doesn't he buy us?"


LEWD AND LASCIVIOUS BEHAVIOR. WHAT DID YOU DO?

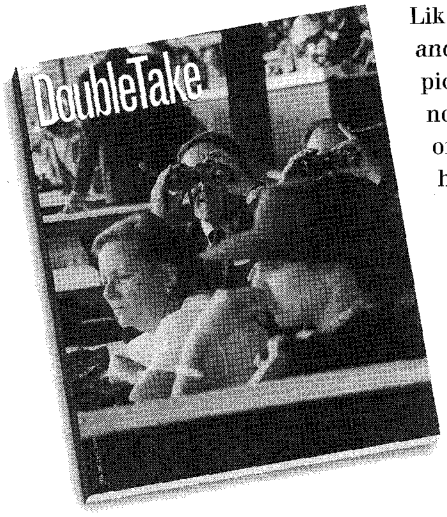
Electronic publishing might also help rescue the endangered mid-list book. Customers interested in, say, Victorian novels or El Niño could scan by subject on-line. Since printing would be optional, and physical space to house books is not involved, more books might live. "Electronics could change our business," says Michael Lynton, the chairman and chief executive of Penguin Putnam. "It could do for the book business what CDs did for the record business. You might find a generation of people coming back to books." Publishers are searching for new formats. Carole Baron, the president and publisher of Dell-Delacorte Publishing, started a new Publishers Choice trade-paperback line, mixing commercial-fiction writers like Danielle Steel with Anna Quindlen and Thomas Harris. "I hope to create new ways to sell the backlist," she says. "I don't have to make zillions of dollars on it. We do around a fifteen-thousand first printing. I'm just trying to find an audience, just as Tom Wolfe, with his new audio format, is looking for a new audience. I think publishing should do more of that, in order to compete with the Internet and television."

Perhaps one day the book as we know it will vanish. Nicholas Negroponte, a founder and the director of the M.I.T. Media Lab, wrote in the hundred-and-twenty-fifth-anniversary issue of *Publishers Weekly* of a "book" made of "electronic paper," with a plug on the back. "You charge it with text in a few seconds, unplug it and take it away to be read—on the beach, in bed, wherever." New texts could be downloaded in the same book, he went on, adding, "In this way, the library of the future could have only one book in it." Such a possibility suggests the great uncertainties of publishing, and prompts these speculations:

In book publishing, a "fact" is not always a fact. While official figures certify that trade book sales have dropped by close to ten per cent in the past two years, bookstore owners like Leonard Riggio insist that over-all book sales are up. (They are if one includes mass-market paperbacks, religious and reference books, and some others.) Publishers complain that they are losing or barely making money, yet agents assert that they are lying to hold down author advances. Although independent bookstores went to court to receive the same

BIG SHOES TO FILL.

In 1939, writer James Agee and photographer Walker Evans put together a book about Alabama sharecroppers called *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men.* (The photo above is from that book.) Their regard for human truth and the ethics of witness now inspire a magazine called DoubleTake.



Like Agee and Evans, we at DoubleTake believe in capturing and conveying the reality of others' lives through a balance of pictures and words — fiction, nonfiction and poetry. Our goal is not to sentimentalize, or shock, but to offer essays and portraits of ordinary lives that will change in subtle yet powerful ways how you look at the world.

Inside the Fall issue of DoubleTake, you'll find Studs Terkel talking about his own life, Maxwell Taylor Kennedy reporting on the juvenile justice system, Helen Levitt and friends playing poker, Bill McKibben arguing for an end to wildlife photography as we know it, and Joel Meyerowitz photographing daily life in Japan in the shadow of Mount Fuji. Plus new work by Edward Hirsch, James Alan McPherson, Joyce Carol Oates, Thomas Roma, Lee Smith, John Szarkowski, George W. S. Trow, David Updike, Alec Wilkinson, and others.

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discount granted the chains, many claim that publishers nevertheless continue to offer far better discounts to the chains. The quicksand spreads, as does the paranoia and distrust.

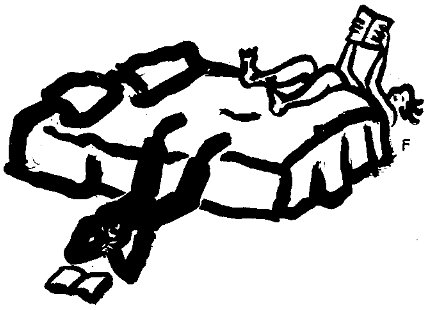
What is big today may break up into many smaller things tomorrow. It is worth recalling that the market for a book, in whatever form it assumes, is, and always has been, a limited one. "I don't remember a time when reading wasn't a minority pursuit or luxury," Sonny Mehta, the editor-in-chief of Knopf, says. "It goes back to Gutenberg. Not everyone could afford to buy books. It's always been a business directed at a minority. Even mass-market paperbacks are not properly mass-market."

Publishing has always been more like theatre than film. Its buying public is about the size of the audience for National Public Radio—twelve million or so—says Peter Osnos, who left Random House in October of 1996 and this year started a modest publishing house dedicated to books on public affairs. In recent months, a number of smaller houses either have just been established or have joined larger corporations in pursuing serious authors. Among them is the former Wall Street investment banker Ken Lipper: he entered into a joint venture with Viking to publish six or eight short biographies annually. Peter Mayer stepped down as C.E.O. of the international Penguin Publishing Group at the end of 1996 to run Overlook Press, a small but growing publishing company that he and his father started twenty-five years ago. He plans to publish forty or fifty new books and twenty-five or thirty reprints annually. The number of small publishers has actually multiplied in recent years. To cite one instance, there are now forty publishers of feminist books in the United States, according to *Publishers Weekly*. An internal report from David Cully, the head of distribution for Barnes & Noble, reveals that in 1996 a majority of books sold by the chain—fifty-one per cent, up from thirty-seven per cent in 1994—came from outside the top ten publishing houses, mostly from university presses and smaller houses.

What's big will get even bigger. Houses like Simon & Schuster and HarperCollins may find buyers if they decide to sell, and it is very likely that those buyers will be other publishers. The big houses will continue to consolidate, for all the familiar reasons: to reduce costs, to increase their market share, to acquire worldwide distribution and lucrative backlists—all of which will increase their sway with bookstores (in the belief that there's nothing like a past best-seller to encourage you to help a publisher get another one) and enhance their appeal among authors (in the belief that there's nothing like a history of best-sellers to convince an author that his book might be the next one). "I think we'll wind up, like the movie business, with five or six majors and lots of imprints," Morton Janklow, who has been a literary agent for the better part of three decades, says. "The editorial imprints will be looking to the majors for distribution, marketing, and financing, but they will retain control of the editorial product." He pauses, then adds, "One hopes."

What's big will also get smaller (*even while it's getting bigger*). "Every time we have to publish a public-affairs book, we cringe," Alberto Vitale, of Random House, says. "People forget about the event it deals with. The attention span of the American public is fleeting. We published the Boris Yeltsin diary. It was one of the best books I've ever read. You got an insight. It got great reviews. It was an easy read. I think we sold thirty thousand copies." In May, HarperCollins folded its Basic Books division into its trade group, ending it as a separate imprint; in August, the house sold Basic outright, to Perseus Capital L.L.C., a media-investment company. Simon & Schuster has slimmed the Free Press, its ideas imprint, while Random House, Inc., has trimmed Times Books. Addison Wesley Longman, which was owned by Pearson P.L.C., saw its New York trade division close.

When the *Times* revealed last summer that HarperCollins was slashing a hundred and six titles and abrogating contracts, many people outside the publishing business were shocked. Those inside not only understood the move but had done much the same thing, albeit more quietly. Irwyn Applebaum, the president and publisher of Bantam Books, says, "We cut back five years ago by thirty per cent." And Carolyn Reidy, of Simon & Schuster, says, "Over the course of the last two years, we have reduced the number of books we publish by fifteen per cent—down from six hundred and fifty to five hundred and fifty. The difference is the way they did it and the way we did it. They did it all at once and, in some cases, after the titles were already in the fall catalogue. They reduced their lists by cancelling contracts. We reduced ours by spreading out the publishing process."



The Internet may be wired with gold. In May, Barnes & Noble launched its own Web site to compete directly with Amazon.com, a Seattle-based electronic bookstore that offers two and a half million titles yearly. While Amazon has yet to earn a profit, it tallied sixteen million dollars of sales in 1996, and this figure was matched in the first quarter of 1997 and jumped to nearly twenty-eight million in the second quarter. "That is the equivalent of approximately twenty-eight big-chain superstores," Amazon's founder, Jeff Bezos, says. Comparing Amazon with traditional bookstores, Bezos keeps repeating his advantages over what he calls "the physical world": he pays no rent, requires no shelves stocked with inventory, offers more choices, and has returns of only two per cent. Yet Bezos confesses that he still buys half his own books from bookstores, because he likes the ambience.

The Borders Group plans to enter the on-line book business, and so does Wal-Mart, which recently announced that it would expand its current inventory to more than three hundred thousand titles at discounts of twenty-five to forty per cent. Barnes & Noble's Len Riggio says he envisions on-line stores as a supplement to, not a replacement for, Barnes & Noble's physical bookstores. "I think the Internet business will be huge, but it won't diminish the retail business at all," he says. "Book shopping is a recreational experience."

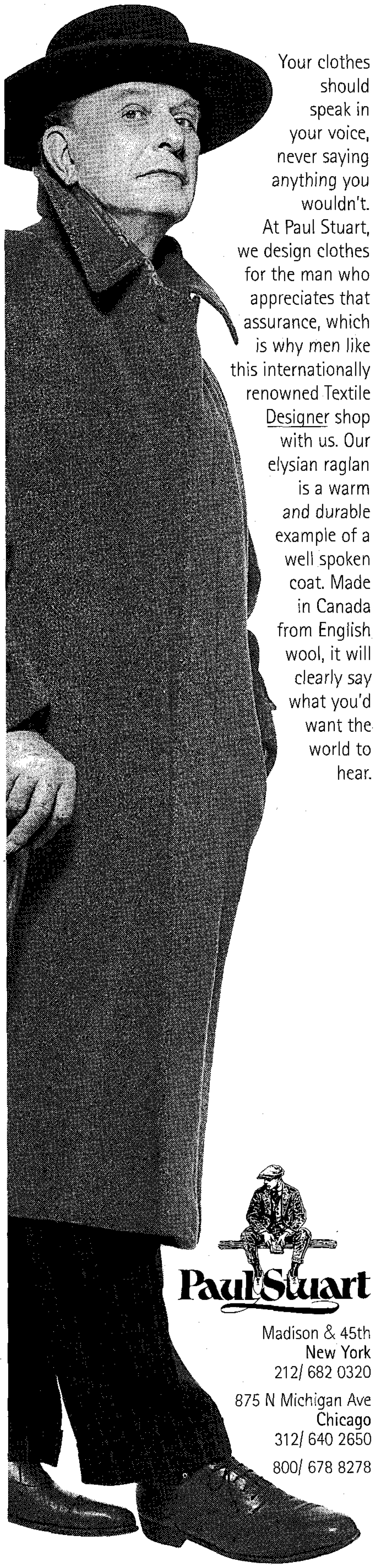
Publishers will become booksellers, and vice versa. In an interview late in the summer, Riggio was lounging in a white swivel chair beside the pool house of his home, a baronial mansion in Bridgehampton, Long Island. He was dressed like a college student—a yellow T-shirt, white chinos, loafers, no socks—and there was little to suggest that he had become a stealth figure in publishing. A number of publishers are convinced that Barnes & Noble has crept, largely unnoticed, into the publishing tent and is poised to murder them—and this before learning of Riggio's interest in HarperCollins. Barnes & Noble and Borders are already inching their way into standard publishing with their own imprints. (Last year, according to a study by Open Book, Barnes & Noble published two hundred reprints and category books, such as cookbooks, and Borders published a hundred titles under various imprints.) Riggio says that most of the books his company publishes are going out of print, so he is really rescuing mid-list books from oblivion. "I think Len Riggio is the smartest guy in town," Richard Snyder, who is now the chairman and C.E.O. of Golden Books Family Entertainment, says. "He understands that once he controls customers he then supplies them with the service product that publishers make their money on and that he now produces. If I were Barnes & Noble, I'd go into the travel-book business. It should buy Frommer, or one of the other travel-book publishers. For example, Monarch Notes has just been bought by Barnes & Noble from Simon & Schuster. It's before everyone's eyes, but no one sees."

Considering Barnes & Noble's expanding superstores and its mission to include publishing, a handful of publishers have held confidential talks aimed at creating a more potent competitor to Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com. A senior publisher dubbed it Project Primestar, an allusion to a partnership of cable companies doing battle in the satellite broadcasting business. "Why can't a consortium of publishers create an electronic bookstore?" that publisher asked. "Do the math. They wouldn't have to give the bookstore fifty-per-cent discounts. They wouldn't need clerks. They wouldn't pay rent. They wouldn't have to ship to bookstores and take returns. The real fight is going to be whether publishers are bright enough and capable enough to form their own distribution system." The possibility, though, is less likely today than it was a few months ago. Some publishers worry that the federal government would intervene, charging that they were conspiring to restrain trade. And now that companies like Wal-Mart have announced plans to expand their electronic-bookstore businesses the fear that Barnes & Noble might extend its domain has abated.

Publishing may have been duped by the American dream. Perhaps publishing has gone Hollywood, attempted to reach the whole country at once, through the big best-seller. Is it possible that they have succeeded and been ruined by the exhilaration of success? Along with Phyllis Grann, at Penguin Putnam, and Sonny Mehta, at Knopf, Time Warner's Larry Kirshbaum is the rare trade publisher whose profit margins have regularly reached the low double digits. Kirshbaum says, "We've got caught up in a Hollywood mentality without Hollywood numbers. I think we got blinded by the Hollywood lights and the thought that we were big time, and not just in the book business. We overpaid and overdistributed. Frankly, I take the blame for part of it."

Michael Naumann, of Henry Holt, still sees American publishing from a foreigner's perspective, and his view, enunciated in German-accented English, is instructive. He talks about an industry "blessed with so many excellent writers" and yet burdened "by such a stratification of mass tastes." He goes on, "That's the big story. This deeply pluralistic, multifaceted, multiethnic, multiregionally-divided hierarchic country has such orderly taste. Everybody seems to have the same taste. So here's my story: The big crisis in American publishing is the triumph of marketing. There's a dialectic of business triumphs. You're able through the friendly help of electronic media to reach a vast market and persuade it—and it wants to be persuaded—that in order to entertain yourself you need two authors, Crichton and Grisham. To cure yourself you need two doctors, Chopra and Weil. To feed yourself you need two authors, Martha Stewart and Julia Child. These brand names, which have become essential to stores, pay the agents extraordinary sums to keep them. These sums usually earn out, because they're brands. They are not human beings anymore."

Publishing may often be a business of brand authors, but how, then, is one to account for a Charles Frazier or a Frank McCourt? Or, for that matter, for the worldwide success of Dava Sobel's "Longitude," published by Walker, a tiny, independent family-owned house. In repeated visits to the publishing colony, I rarely met an editor or a publisher who didn't marvel at these successes—books that were published well and reaffirmed publishers' faith in the existence of serious readers. Such titles are proof that one can still fall in love with a book, gamble on one's taste, and achieve a reward that cannot be measured in dollars. ♦



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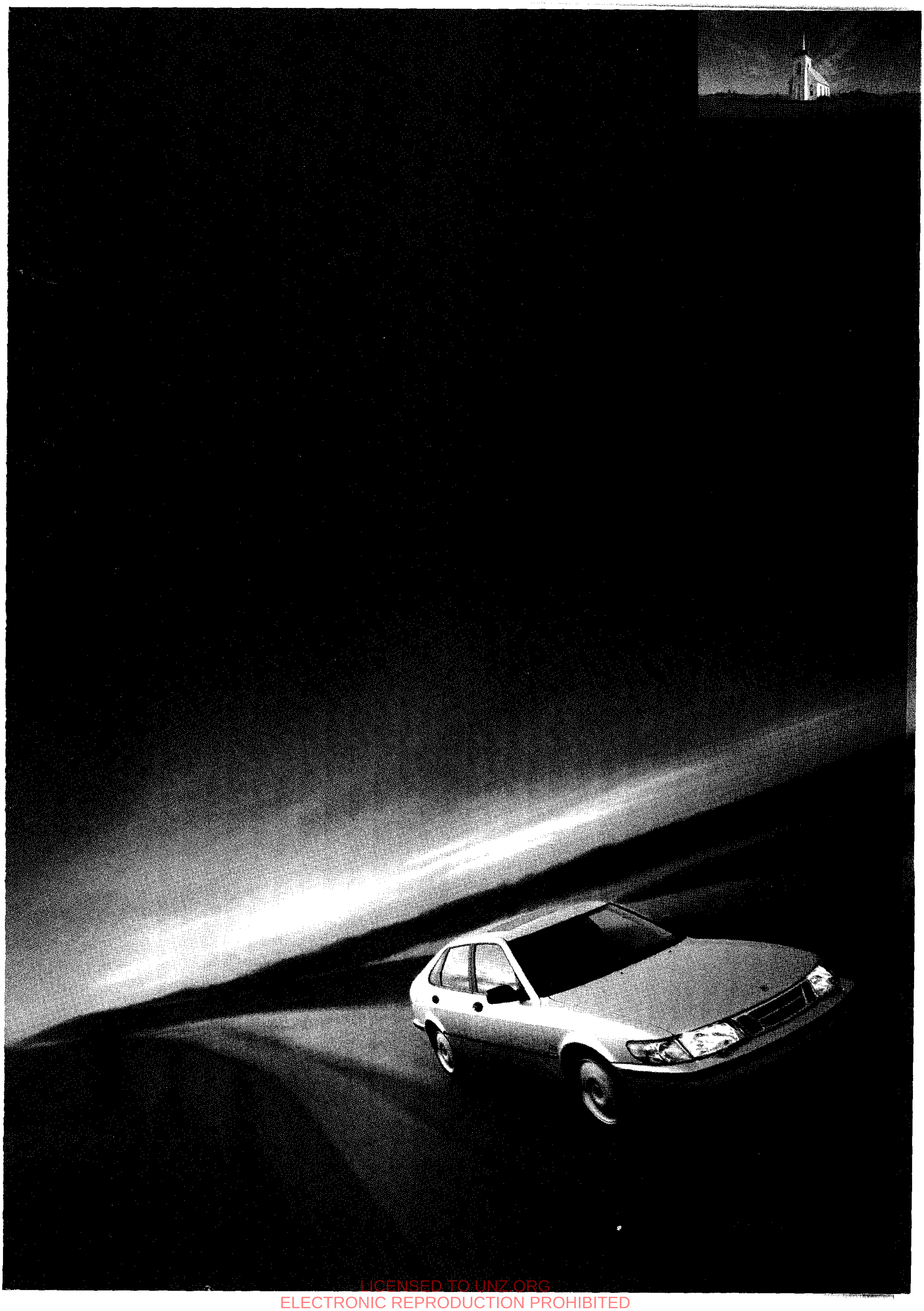

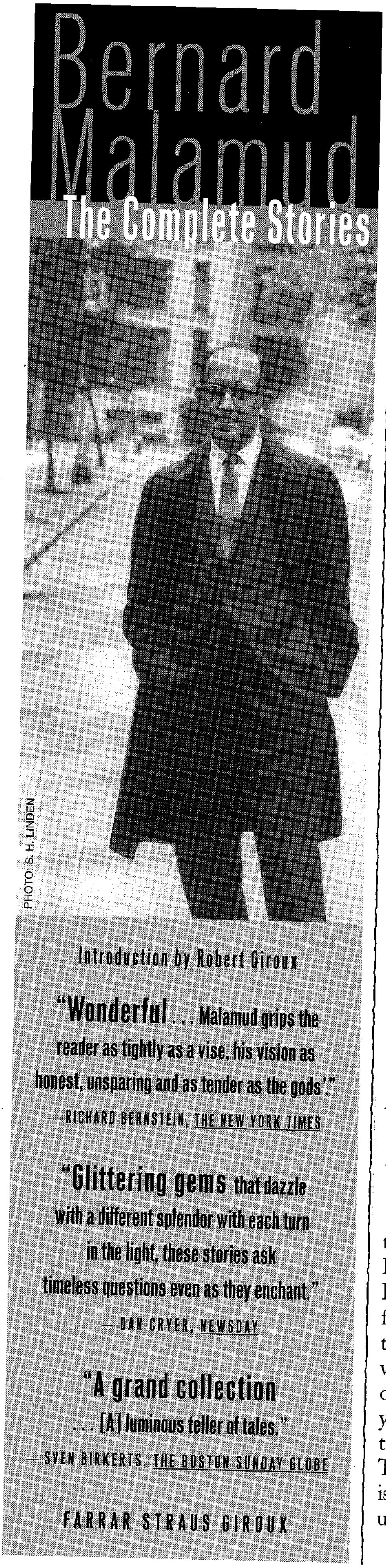

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LETTER FROM LONDON

THE TWO TONYS

Why is the Prime Minister so interested in what Anthony Giddens thinks?

BY ROBERT S. BOYNTON

PERHAPS the most unlikely hit of this past season in London's West End was "Tom & Clem," by Stephen Churchett, an ensemble piece about a fictional encounter between Prime Minister Clement Attlee and the left-wing journalist Tom Driberg during the 1945 Potsdam Conference. In the play's opening scene, a soldier enters the conference room, takes down a portrait of Winston Churchill, and hangs one of a dour-looking Attlee in its place. With the Allies victorious in Europe, Labour has just won an unprecedented landslide, ushering the leonine Churchill out of office and the considerably less imposing Attlee in. Despite the gratitude that Britain feels for its larger-than-life wartime leader, it has decided that it wants a meeker man to win the peace.

The play is a sort of "My Dinner with Attlee," exploring the nature of political and personal compromise, and the conflict between democracy and totalitarianism against the backdrop of the geopolitical maneuverings that would dominate the world for the next fifty years. Driberg, pressing his case with invocations of Marx and Lenin, is dismayed to discover that Attlee doesn't subscribe to his radical socialist vision.

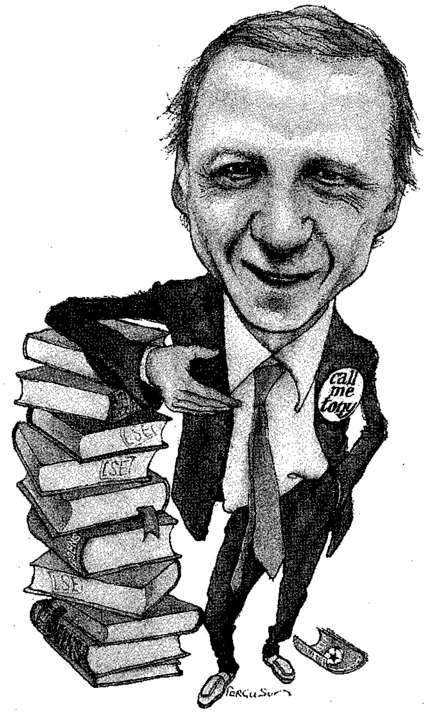
"We'll have a revolution, but in our own way," Attlee says. "Unextravagant. Without tears."

"A revolution without tears?" Driberg moans.

"They blur the vision," Attlee answers.

Much of the play's popularity is due to the fact that, following the Labour Party's greatest triumph since Attlee's, Britain is again on the brink of a profound social transformation—a "revolution without tears," but one in reverse, in which the future of the welfare state, or whatever remains of it after eighteen years of Tory rule, is coming under scrutiny by the party that invented it. Indeed, Tony Blair's most popular campaign promise was that he would modernize Britain's unwieldy state bureaucracy, which owes its existence to the work of such social scientists as Richard Titmuss, T. H. Marshall, and Lord William Beveridge. It was Beveridge's 1942 report, "Social Insurance and Allied Services," that established universal entitlements as the modern citizen's statutory right.

The Aldwych Theatre, where "Tom & Clem" was playing, is just down the street from the London School of Economics—once home to Marshall, Titmuss, Beveridge, and even Attlee, who taught there between the wars and later drew much of his Cabinet from the ranks of its faculty. The connection between Labour and L.S.E. dates back a hundred years, to the university's founding by Beatrice and Sidney Webb—Fabians who not only started the school but also helped build the Labour Party, with the explicit goal of promoting the cause of socialism. Today's L.S.E. is a less partisan and more conventionally prominent university than the Webbs originally envisioned. (It has,



Giddens popularized the "radical center"—Tony Blair's favorite phrase.

JAMES FERGUSON

in the past, served as a source of free-market policy, and the Higher Education Funding Council recently ranked it the second-best university in the country, just below Cambridge but above Oxford.) But its administration has now been invaded by a cadre of New Labour's new élite: "Tonycrats" who, according to London's *Sunday Times,* have made it the "mecca for Blairite businessmen and left-wing luvvies."

Chief among the Tonycrats is L.S.E.'s new director, Anthony Giddens, the distinguished Cambridge sociologist whom the policy journal *Prospect* calls "the key intellectual figure of New Labour." The author of some thirty dense theoretical tomes, Giddens gained new prominence with his recent book "Beyond Left and Right," in which he argues that both sides of the political spectrum have exhausted themselves, leaving a "radical center" (Blair's favorite phrase) from which to reconfigure the foundations of politics and society. Ian Hargreaves, the editor of the *New Statesman,* calls the book "*the* text of Blairism," adding, "In Giddens you have somebody whose intellectual and political journey is ideally made for the circumstances of Blair and New Labour."

Like the new Prime Minister, Giddens is a man of the sixties who has retooled himself to confront the complexities of the post-Cold War world of the nineties. In the months leading up to May's general election, he was frequently asked to address New Labour's private strategy sessions as well as its public rallies. And although Giddens is not a member of Blair's inner circle, his work has helped define the theoretical context for many of the reforms that are being debated in Britain today. As the *Sunday Times* reported, "Whenever Blair is accused of intellectual vacuity, he cites Giddens as 'the guy who thinks like me.' " An adviser to the Prime Minister says, "Giddens has a strong sense of the role of ideas in political change and is therefore an important part of developing a sustainable New Labour program. We don't pretend to have all the answers, but he is helping us define some of the questions." The leadership's enthusiasm for the post-partisan nature of Giddens's work, especially his rethinking of the future of the welfare state, does have its critics—inside the party and out—who wonder whether his philosophy isn't little more than the "mood music" of New Labour, providing an intellectual cover behind which to hide a conservative agenda. It is unclear how Giddens's ideas will ultimately be used, but it is instantly apparent why he has been so assiduously courted by both the party and L.S.E.

Previously the holder of the first permanent chair in sociology at Cambridge, Giddens, who is fifty-nine, is an intellectual powerhouse—"simply the most important English social philosopher of our time," the New York University sociologist Richard Sennett says. Giddens's books cover everything from historical materialism to the West's notions of intimacy and the self. His work has been the subject of twelve books, and Routledge has just published a four-volume collection of "critical assessments" of it—an honor previously bestowed upon such luminaries as Max Weber, Émile Durkheim, and Michel Foucault. This past January, the same month in which Giddens became the director of L.S.E., the political implications of his œuvre were appraised by some of Britain's most distinguished intellectuals and journalists at a conference at the Institute of Contemporary Arts.

Giddens is often described by colleagues as "clever" or "ambitious," because of his worldly interests as well as his unusually broad intellectual scope—a backhanded compliment in the staid world of British academe. After parsing theories of power for the first half of his career, he discovered that he had a flair for actually wielding it. In 1983, he co-founded Polity Press, in order to publish European social thinkers like Jurgen Habermas, Pierre Bourdieu, and Jean Baudrillard, who were then largely neglected. In 1985, he bulldozed his way through Cambridge's byzantine bureaucracy to establish the Social and Political Sciences Faculty and became its first chairman.

As L.S.E.'s director, Giddens has brought a renewed sense of excitement to the university. He is currently wooing a number of world-class scholars to join the faculty. And he has made several high-profile appointments to the Court of Governors, among them the cultural broadcaster and author Melvyn Bragg, the movie producer David Puttnam, and the publisher Robert Gavron. "It is once again a great pleasure to go there," the sociologist Lord Ralf Dahrendorf, who is

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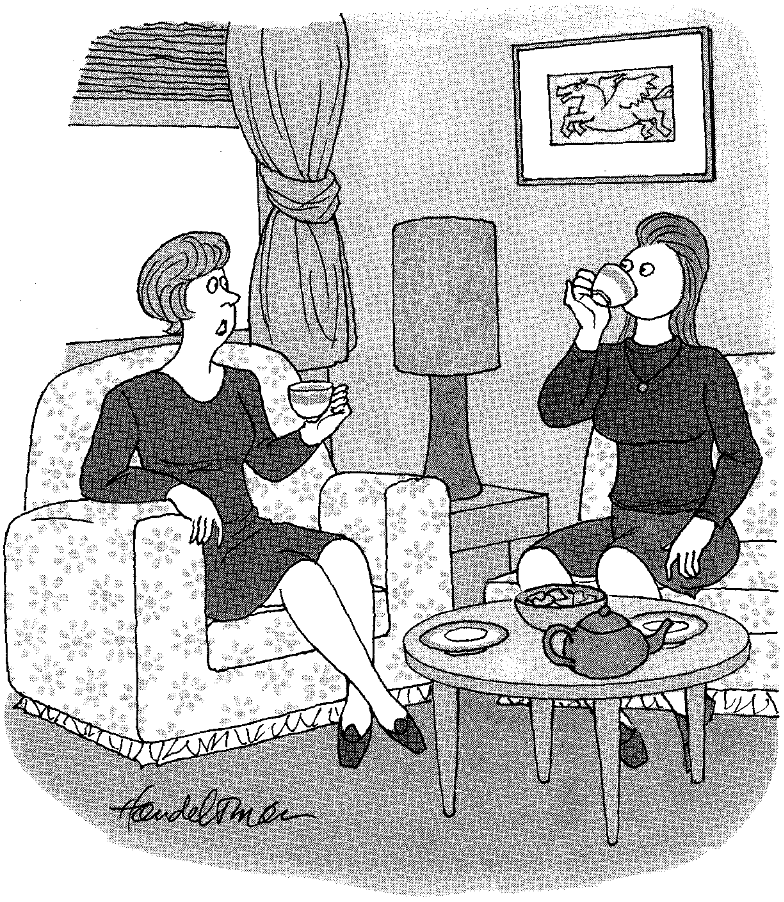


"Fred is heterosexual, but I wish he'd be a little more blatant about it."

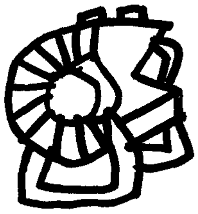
• •

himself a former L.S.E. director, says. "Giddens is creating an L.S.E. that is very much his own by introducing a new intellectual dynamic rather than fitting into an existing pattern." Lord Meghnad Desai, an L.S.E. professor of economics, underscores the importance of the director's impeccable intellectual credentials. "At Oxford and Cambridge, they are snobs about food and wine. At L.S.E., we are snobs only about intellect," he says.

THE anonymous, ramshackle buildings that constitute L.S.E.'s Houghton Street "campus" barely stand out from the sombre banks and law offices that surround them. It is a perfect ambience for the decidedly undonnish Giddens. "Call me Tony," he says in a soft North London accent as he greets me, using the same phrase with which Blair opened his first Cabinet meeting only a few weeks earlier. A sprite of a man who appears fifteen years younger than his age, Giddens is completely different from the mental image I had constructed while struggling through page after page of his authoritative, unforgiving prose; it is hard to imagine him reading his books, much less writing them. As he jokes about L.S.E.'s typically British lack of air-conditioning, and brushes a lock of dark hair from his face, I begin to understand why the newspapers have taken to calling him "laddish." He is more likely to answer a complex question with a casual shrug than with a discourse on the nature of society. When I ask whether his early work owed something to the philosopher Paul Ricœur's notion of "the hermeneutics of suspicion," Giddens replies dismissively, "Nah, as a young bloke I was just bloody-minded." While such a low-key manner might once have hindered an ambitious academic in class-conscious Britain, it is perfectly in tune with the studied informality of the Blair era.

After showing me a copy of a new German edition of "Beyond Left and Right," Giddens suggests that we escape the interruptions of his busy office and talk in the school’s dingy coffee shop. Running L.S.E. has taxed his managerial skills, yet this past semester he did find time to give a weekly lecture course on interpretations of modernity which was seen by at least a thousand students. (Hundreds watched by video from an adjacent hall.) Giddens is famous for his well-organized talks, which he delivers entirely from memory. “Tony is a brilliant lecturer,” the sociologist Steven Lukes says. “The only person who compares was the Oxford historian A. J. P. Taylor, who spoke without notes and would hold us spellbound for hours.”

Now, with an audience of one, Giddens shares his vision for L.S.E., New Labour, and the country. “L.S.E. has a great opportunity to become an intellectual beacon again,” he says. “We’re getting back to our roots, to when L.S.E. guided the fate of the nation. The Webbs founded an institution that wasn’t a cloister, that had real purchase on the world—a place for deep structural analysis which also communicated with the wider public. With Titmuss, and Beveridge, and Marshall, and Attlee, L.S.E. was the launching pad for the welfare state. Later, it was the center for the free-market counter-revolution, with Friedrich von Hayek and Karl Popper, both of whom greatly influenced Thatcher. Now I want L.S.E. to be at the center of the third phase—rethinking what politics and the state should be in a globalized, post-traditional world. This is the one place where leading politicians and businessmen meet with intellectuals on a regular basis. We are a bridge between the City and Westminster.”



Giddens doesn’t conceal his admiration for Blair, but he has no desire to transform L.S.E. into a New Labour think tank. Rather, he believes that the university can best serve the nation by alternately supporting and criticizing Blair’s agenda, certain aspects of which—family values, communitarianism, and Christian moralism, for example—make him uncomfortable. Giddens believes that modernization should take place at every level, from state bureaucracies to moral attitudes. He is in complete agreement with Blair, however, that the welfare state as we know it is over. “The welfare state is a passive-risk system—it isn’t designed to encourage people to make active investment decisions with their lives,” he explains. “It only reacts to things when they go wrong: it takes care of you when you are ill, it puts you on the dole when you’re unemployed. But it has been ineffective in actually countering poverty or redistributing wealth in the long term.” Unlike the Thatcherites, Giddens doesn’t want to dismantle the welfare state; he wants to reconceive it. “Think of the welfare state not as the left traditionally has thought of it—as a mechanism to alleviate inequality—but as a kind of insurance system that allows people to take risks. We must provide people with the resources they require to be active investors, as it were, but at the same time we must provide security mechanisms which protect them.”

Giddens calls this concept of welfare-as-social-insurance “positive welfare,” a scheme according to which the state would play a more proactive yet less intrusive role in its citizens’ lives. By emphasizing greater job stability over increased income, for example, the state might broaden its concern to encompass the psychological, and not just the economic, well-being of its citizens. Giddens offers a series of suggestions, ranging from a tax system that assesses income in three-year periods, in order to benefit those who lose their jobs or experience a sudden drop in income in any given year, to a way of redistributing work which decreases the gap between society’s haves and its have-nots. Since “the possession of wealth doesn’t necessarily make one happy, any more than poverty as such is a source of misery,” he writes, “why not, therefore, attempt to bring the conditions of life of rich and poor closer together, even if this isn’t done through wealth or income transfers?” To this end, he suggests, the state might give tax incentives to corporations that “gear recruitment and job stability to wider social needs” or to those that break down the division between “men’s” and “women’s” jobs, thereby helping to modernize the family. Under positive welfare, Giddens sees a potential for diminishing social inequality while simultaneously encouraging personal responsibility—a scheme whose indebtedness to both conservative and liberal traditions places it, he claims, “beyond left and right.”

These proposals are sketchy, to be

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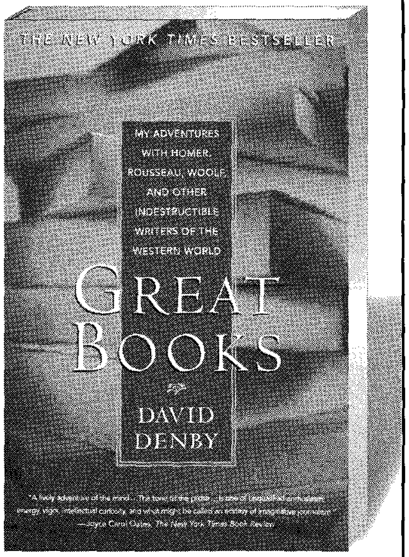
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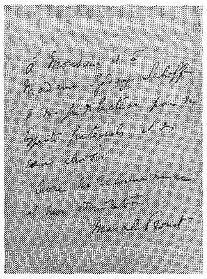

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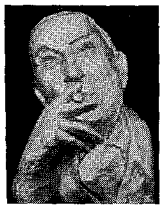

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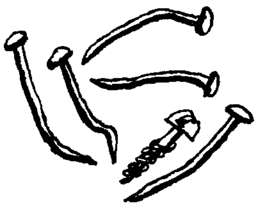
sure, and Giddens has been criticized for proffering utopian solutions to all-too-real dilemmas. He responds to such accusations by saying that his vision is informed by the principle of “utopian realism”—an approach that joins utopian ideals with empirically observable trends. The way we anticipate the future helps shape it, he argues, and therefore, by deriving seemingly utopian solutions from existing progressive social movements, we might eventually bring about the kinds of changes which were once thought to be impossible. Writing in *Prospect*, the political journalist John Lloyd suggests that New Labour’s ambitious agenda is itself operating in this way. “The most radical and ambitious part of the programme is utopian in the depth of change it will usher in,” he writes. Even the possibility of expunging Labour’s socialist tendencies, Lloyd adds, “seemed utopian until a few years ago.”

As the express train from King’s Cross station to Cambridge hurtles down the tracks through North London, Giddens points out Alexandra Palace, with its spiralling forest of BBC antennas, where he played as a child. He is on his way to a Polity Press editorial meeting, and as we talk he flips through a stack of book proposals. Giddens grew up in the working-class suburb of Edmonton, where his father had a job with the London Underground ordering fabric for train seats. The elder of two boys (his brother now directs television commercials in Los Angeles), Giddens attended a local grammar school, where he was an indifferent student, more interested in soccer than in his studies. One of his schoolmates was David Puttnam, who is now a fellow New Labour supporter. Puttnam recalls, “If you were a bright kid in London in the late fifties, anything was possible. It was the Macmillan period, and we believed that the world was ours for the taking.”



Giddens went on to the University of Hull, and he was graduated with honors in psychology and sociology. In 1961, he received a master’s degree from L.S.E., having written a thesis on the social history of sports which brought together his love of soccer and a burgeoning interest in the class system. “I looked at sport as the other side of industrialism and found some very strong class divisions,” he says. “Most middle-class sports, like rugby, weren’t originally competitive. You couldn’t have leagues or become a professional—just playing the game was more important than winning. On the other hand, working-class sports, like soccer, were very competitive and were professionalized early on. Each was the product of very different work circumstances. Since the bourgeoisie were individualistic and competitive at work, they wanted the opposite in sports. Whereas the working classes were in collaborative environments where they couldn’t advance as individuals. For them, sport had a more competitive ethos.”

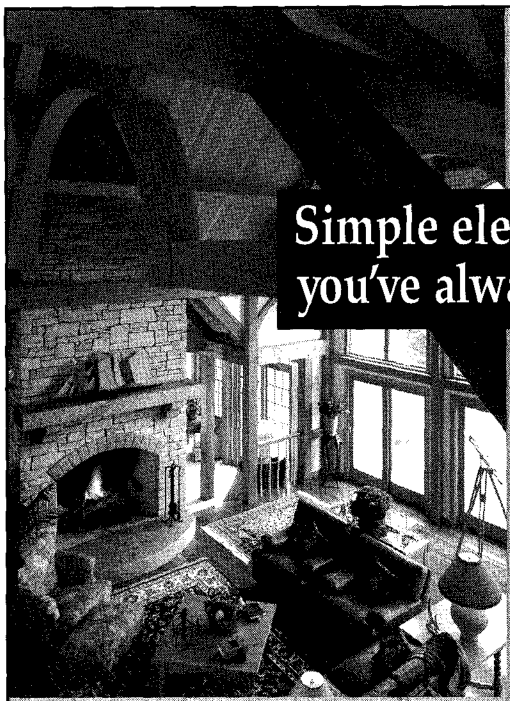
After L.S.E., Giddens taught sociology at the University of Leicester, and there he met the German scholar Norbert Elias. A Jewish refugee whose work on the sociology of manners wasn’t noted until late in his life, Elias was possessed of a determination that impressed Giddens. “He was always working, and he behaved as if he were a world-famous scholar, when in fact he wasn’t,” Giddens says. “But then he eventually became as famous as he knew he should be.” Taking Elias’s example to heart, Giddens became a compulsive writer and churned out studies on the history of social theory at a furious pace. He has published a book (sometimes two) every year since 1970.

Giddens’s interest in contemporary sociology was sparked during a year he lived in Venice, California, while teaching at U.C.L.A. “It was 1968, and when I went to the Pacific Ocean for the very first time in my life the coast was lined with armed cops, and there were thousands of hippies strewn along the beach wearing all sorts of strange clothes,” he recalls. “It looked like the fall of the Roman Empire.” Until then, he had been fairly apolitical, accepting the vaguely leftish attitudes that were de rigueur for sixties social scientists. “In Europe, although you might be radical in your politics it wouldn’t affect your life style, but in California people experimented with everything,” he says. “If you were politically radical, you had to be sexually radical and all the rest of it. I’d never seen an entirely experimental life style. It gave me a kick in the backside." The notion that modernity is "experimental to its core" soon began popping up in his writings.

WHEN Giddens looks at modernity, he sees a world in which the Enlightenment's dream of mastery over nature, as it was articulated by Kant and Marx, has turned on itself. Where once it was thought that technological innovation would increase man's leisure and beautify the world, we now have workaholics and ecological devastation. Giddens likens modernity to an enormous juggernaut, which crushes all those who resist it. "The ride is by no means wholly unpleasant or unrewarding; it can often be exhilarating and charged with hopeful anticipation," he writes. But "we shall never be able to control completely either the path or the pace of the journey. In turn, we shall never be able to feel entirely secure, because the terrain across which it runs is fraught with risks of high consequence."

Giddens argues that the concept of risk is a peculiarly modern one; in the Middle Ages, for instance, one simply believed that things "happened" according to the providence of God or nature. Modernity, in contrast, is characterized by the omnipresence of "manufactured risk," man-made hazards that are the result of what man has done to nature, rather than what nature does to man. The Frankenstein monsters of pollution, overcrowding, global warming, and techno-ennui—our creations, not nature's—are out of control.

Living in a world of manufactured risk makes us extremely self-conscious; life becomes a series of complex calculations in which we "establish a portfolio of risk assessment" as we try to construct a viable identity. The decision to get married, for example, is affected by our knowledge of divorce statistics; the decision not to smoke or not to eat certain foods reflects our knowledge of scientific studies on the danger each presents. In a couple of conversations that took place this spring between Giddens and the billionaire financier (and L.S.E. graduate) George Soros, the two agreed that the fluctuations of the financial markets are a paradigm for the reflexive nature of our risk calculations. If it sounds as if Giddens is saying that modern citizens are



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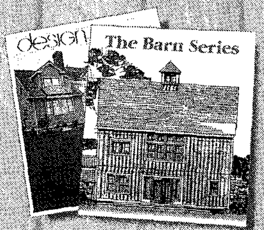

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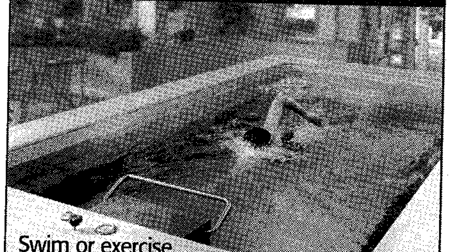

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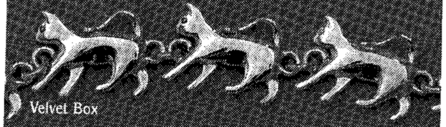

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amateur sociologists, he is. "Modernity is itself deeply and intrinsically sociological," he writes, and it leaves the professional sociologist in the awkward position of being "at most one step ahead of enlightened lay practitioners of the discipline."

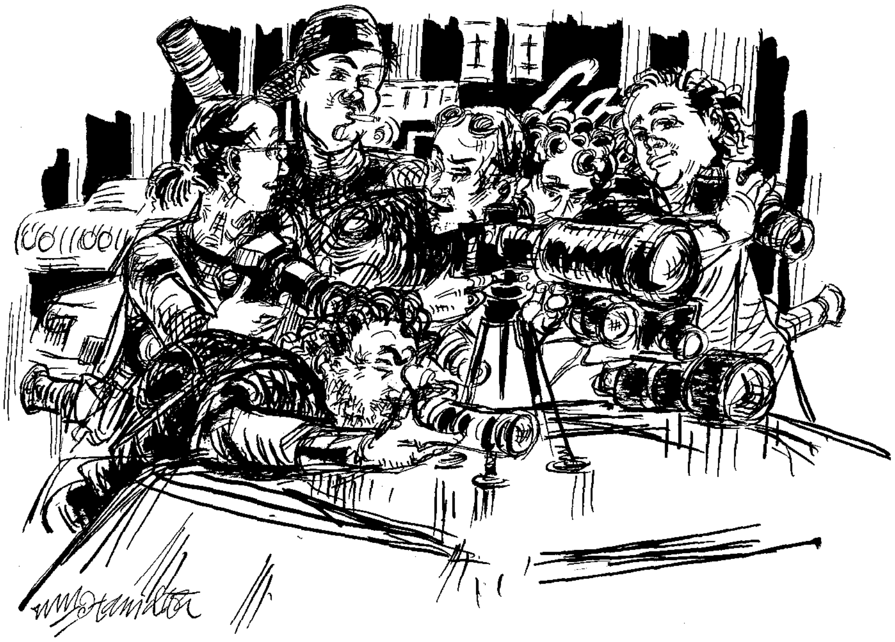
IT is commencement day at Cambridge, and the grounds look even more pristine than usual. Couples punt lazily along the Cam, and the royal flag flaps against a cloudless sky. Giddens and I tour the campus and end up at the Social and Political Sciences (S.P.S.) Faculty, in the old Cavendish Laboratory, where Ernest Rutherford, the man who split the atom, once worked. Little about the building seems to have changed since Rutherford's time. The Maxwell Lecture Theatre, where Giddens taught, is a veritable church of science, its rows of hard, straight-backed wooden pews rising across from an experiment table encrusted with dials, fuses, switches, wheels, and buzzers. Even though the building is now the epicenter of social and political—not natural—science at Cambridge, members of the S.P.S. Faculty still have their urine checked regularly for traces of mercury.

Before Giddens joined L.S.E., he spent twenty-six years at Cambridge. His relationship to the class-bound university, like that of the social sciences in general, had always been somewhat ambivalent. Sociology didn't become a recognized discipline at Cambridge until 1969. When Giddens was hired, a year later, it was still a fledgling "committee." Yet it was an exciting time to be at a university whose staff included such scholars as Edward Shils, Raymond Williams, Quentin Skinner, and Frank Kermode. Giddens says he was never very attracted to the hallowed traditions of university life, preferring to spend his time writing. When he was not in his study, he might be spotted speeding about town in an Alfa Romeo. His disdain for Cambridge culture was not appreciated by some colleagues; they accused him of hypocritically snubbing the very system whose benefits he was enjoying. The political theorist John Dunn remembers that Giddens's class consciousness was always an issue. "One afternoon, we were going to a seminar at Christ's College, and as we walked through the entryway a porter turned to him and asked, 'Excuse me, mate, are you making a delivery?' I think Tony rather liked that."

Giddens wrote most of his books while he was at Cambridge, including "The Constitution of Society" (1984), a methodological treatise in which he outlined his "structuration theory." In essence, he argued that individuals create their social contexts even while being constrained by them. With structuration, Giddens tried to resolve the debate over whether society or the individual is the appropriate unit of analysis. By focussing on the dynamic relationship between the two, structuration theory laid out an analytical compromise.

Giddens acquired an international reputation, but it took fourteen years for Cambridge to promote him from lecturer to reader. Some of his colleagues disliked the interdisciplinary nature of his work and thought it thin and unduly broad, while others resented what they perceived to be his undeserved renown. "Tony and I had a contest for who could be passed over the greater number of times," the economist Ajit Singh says. Giddens was finally promoted on his tenth consideration, in 1984. A year later, he edged out the presumed favorite candidate, Geoffrey Hawthorn, for the newly established permanent chair in sociology. Following Giddens's appointment, Hawthorn published an essay in the *London Review of Books* attacking his work as "a bland rehearsal of what others have been saying for twenty years." Another prominent sociologist accused Giddens of "purveying trendy waffle." Many speculated that part of Giddens's motivation in establishing the S.P.S. Faculty, which he did that same year, was a desire to find a more congenial base for himself at Cambridge. He spent the next twelve years reconciling the ancient institution to the new discipline. The skill with which he did so helped improve his relations with some of his colleagues. It also caught the eye of Labour Party leaders who were looking for pragmatic intellectuals.

READING the British newspapers over the past few months, one got a feel for the paradoxes that characterize the Blair era. Just as Britain was handing the Crown Colony of Hong Kong over to the Chinese, there was speculation on whether Tony Blair might usurp Helmut Kohl's role as the leader of the



"I mean, like, in painting, we'd be called a 'school.' "

• •

European Union. After initiating the process of parliamentary independence for Scotland and Wales, Blair renewed his communitarian call for the diverse population of Britain to come together as "one nation." The first prime minister to address the Trades Union Congress in two decades, he startled the membership by warning that it must rethink its policies if it is to survive. Expansion and consolidation, radicalism and conservatism—these seemingly contradictory developments, Giddens argues, are characteristic of the exhaustion of received ideologies in a globalized world: left and right, the global and the local, become intertwined to the point where they are nearly indistinguishable. "Distant events may become as familiar, or more so, than proximate influences, and integrated into the frameworks of personal experience," he writes. "The appearance, personality, and policies of a world political leader may be better known to a given individual than those of his next-door neighbour. A person may be more familiar with the debate over global warming than with why the tap in the kitchen leaks."

As further examples of globalization, Giddens cites Blair's support of the European Union's Social Chapter (a package of basic workers' rights), and the dynamics of Welsh and Scottish devolution. "Local nationalisms are a response to a globalizing process that allows you to situate your identity elsewhere," he explains. "The Scots look to the E.U. in much the same way that the Catalonians do: they see themselves as part of the wider United Kingdom without restricting themselves to a single sovereignty. The result is a more cosmopolitan state, whose people have multiple identities. You will be able to be Scottish, British, *and* European."

Giddens is deeply engaged in the debate among British intellectuals over whether New Labour's openness to Europe, which he strongly supports, presages an enhanced global role for the country. "The United Kingdom has historically played a mediating role between Europe and the United States," he says, "and it is now more clear than ever that neither political model is satisfactory: it is no longer a choice between giving in to Europe or sticking to our origins. Blair understands that we are on the brink of a truly transnational, cosmopolitan society, which can simultaneously consolidate local democracies and produce a global order that is more than a mere free-trade bloc."

The modern world, according to Giddens, is not only fully global but also "post-traditional," a term he uses to mean that, though tradition endures in a society, it has lost the privileged status that once enabled it to trump all other contenders. Traditions must now justify

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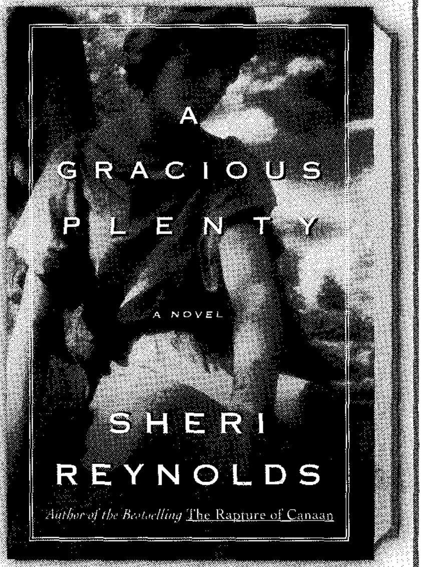

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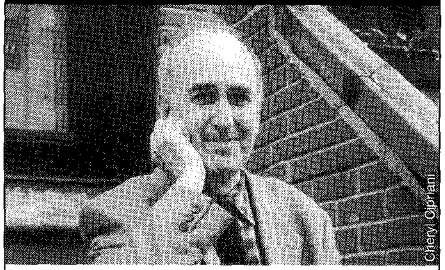

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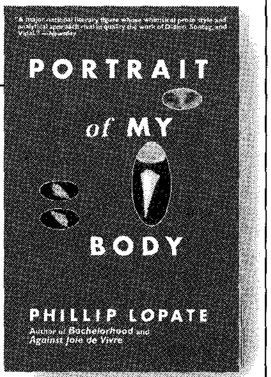

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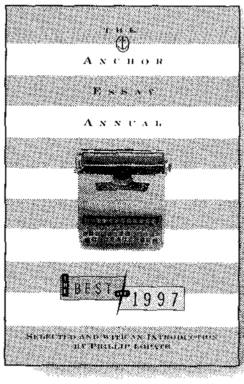

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themselves in the same manner as any other points of view. Everything is “constructed” in a post-traditional society, and nothing is “given”: one must choose every facet of one's life, from the nature of one's personal or sexual identity to one's profession or religion. The tradition-minded days when a woman's marriage prospects were calculated with an eye toward her family's finances, or a man was expected to take up his father's profession, are over. In a post-traditional world, men and women simply don't have predefined natures. Even the decision to forgo the dizzying collection of options afforded by the modern world, and conform to the status quo ante, is itself a decision. “Individuals have no choice but to make choices,” he writes.

Politics is similarly redefined in a post-traditional society. According to Giddens, the ideological tenor of our times is as much a result of the collapse of conservative political thought as it is of the fall of Communism. The New Right ideology forged in the Reagan-Thatcher era has become internally contradictory by embracing the free-market capitalism that conservatism orginally repudiated. On the one hand, the New Right is hostile to tradition, but “on the other, it *depends upon* the persistence of tradition for its legitimacy and its attachment to conservatism—in areas of the nation, religion, gender, and the family,” he writes. In the meantime, socialists, once the mighty “vanguard of history,” have been reduced to defending the bare bones of the welfare state. “Conservatism become radical here confronts socialism become conservative,” he adds.

This simultaneous collapse of the right and the left clears the way, Giddens believes, for the resuscitation of what he calls “philosophic conservatism”—a tradition that he associates with the political theorist Michael Oakeshott, who taught at L.S.E. in the fifties and sixties. Now that conservatism has been shorn of its New Right trappings, the center-left can appropriate its concern for “conservation, restoration, and repair.” Giddens points to Europe's Green movement as the prototype for the kind of post-ideological politics he advocates. By focussing on ecological issues of universal, transnational concern, the Greens have created a sustainable radical center, and whether their goals are achieved by way of left or right tactics doesn't matter. “We should all become conservatives now,” Giddens writes, “but not in the conservative way.”

BACK at L.S.E., I ask Giddens what he thinks New Labour's legacy will be, and he answers that question by telling me about “The Two Tony Blairs”—a talk he gave recently at one of the stock-taking symposia that seem to punctuate the passing of every week in Britain. “On the one hand, you have the Tony Blair who occupies the center, steals conservative policies, and replaces the Labour Party's left-wing philosophy with a right-wing one—a more humane version of Thatcherism,” Giddens says. In the days leading up to the election, many intellectuals saw New Labour in exactly this way—an attitude best captured by Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques in an essay in the *Observer* entitled, “Tony Blair: The Greatest Tory Since Thatcher?”

“Tony Blair II,” Giddens continues, “is much more radical and free-thinking. He is genuinely working on the terrain that is beyond left and right, rather than opting for the right over the left. He is exploring the very question of what it means to be a radical modernizer who is concerned with social justice and equality but is mindful of the constraints placed on the state by a global market economy. The center-left doesn't preclude radicalism. The radical center is an oxymoron only if you believe that the left and right still define all the worthwhile ideas and policies. I don't, and I don't think Blair does.” If Giddens's ideas are to leave their mark on Great Britain, it will be only if Blair II triumphs.

Giddens says that his next book will be about Britain and the global society, but in the meantime he is searching for a way to summarize the radical ideological changes that are taking place today. “We need a popular name for the kind of political theory that is emerging now,” he says. “There was Communism, socialism, capitalism, Thatcherism, and we have something else now. It boils down to ‘a theory of social justice and individualism in the context of the global market society,’ but we need a shorter name. Perhaps an acronym? I'll have to think about that.” ♦

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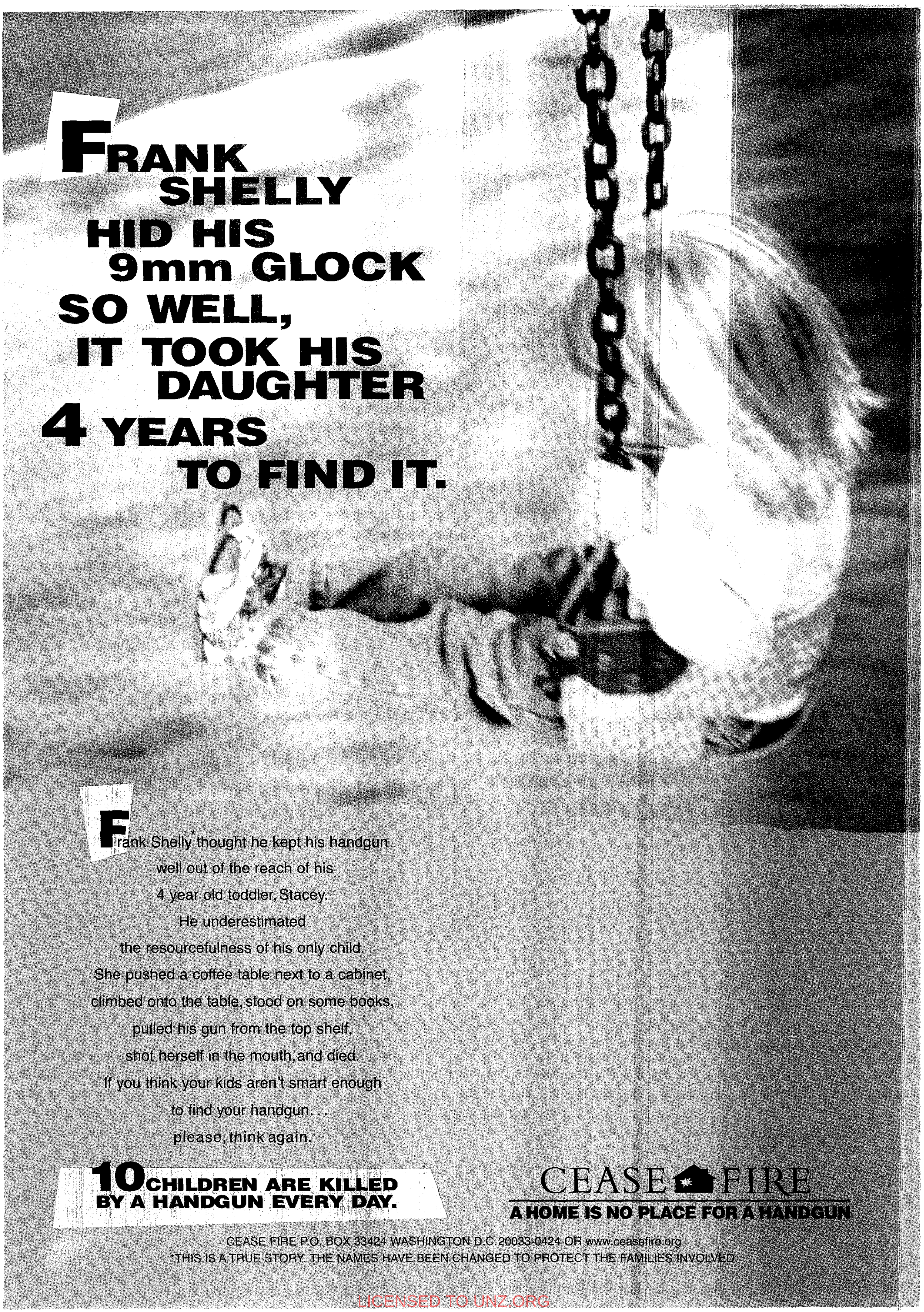

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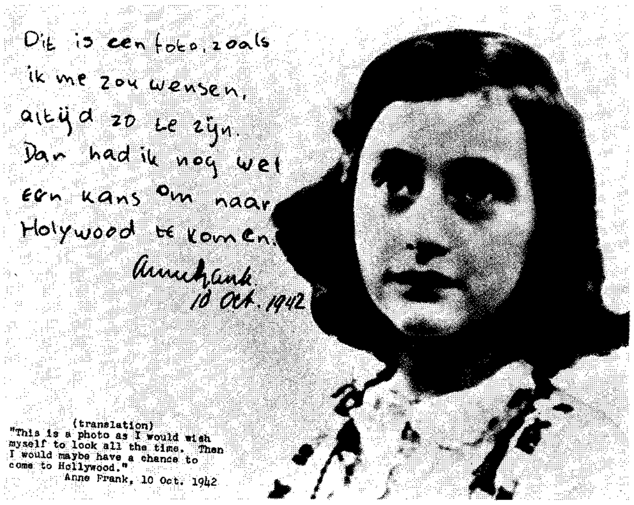
The diary has been distorted by even her greatest champions. Would history have been better served if it had been destroyed?

BY CYNTHIA OZICK



Dit is een foto, zoals
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altijd zo te zijn.
Dan had ik nog wel
een kans om naar
Holywood te komen.
Annefrank.
10 Oct. 1942

(translation)
"This is a photo as I would wish myself to look all the time. Then I would maybe have a chance to come to Hollywood."
Anne Frank, 10 Oct. 1942

To believe that the diary was "a song to life" is to stew in an ugly innocence. The building (opposite) that Anne Frank considered her cage.

If Anne Frank had not perished in the criminal malevolence of Bergen-Belsen early in 1945, she would have marked her sixty-eighth birthday last June. And even if she had not kept the extraordinary diary through which we know her it is likely that we would number her among the famous of this century—though perhaps not so dramatically as we do now. She was born to be a writer. At thirteen, she felt her power; at fifteen, she was in command of it. It is easy to imagine—had she been allowed to live—a long row of novels and essays spilling from her fluent and ripening pen. We can be certain (as certain as one can be of anything hypothetical) that her mature prose would today be noted for its wit and acuity, and almost as certain that the trajectory of her work would be closer to that of Nadine Gordimer, say, than to that of Françoise Sagan. As an international literary presence, she would be thick rather than thin. "I want to go on living even after my death!" she exclaimed in the spring of 1944.

This was more than an exaggerated adolescent flourish. She had already intuited what greatness in literature might mean, and she clearly sensed the force of what lay under her hand in the pages of her diary: a conscious literary record of frightened lives in daily peril; an explosive document aimed directly at the future. In her last months, she was assiduously polishing phrases and editing passages with an eye to postwar publication. *Het Achterhuis*, as she called her manuscript, in Dutch—"the house behind," often translated as "the secret annex"—was hardly intended to be Anne Frank's last word; it was conceived as the forerunner work of a professional woman of letters.

Yet any projection of Anne Frank as a contemporary figure is an unholy speculation: it tampers with history, with reality, with deadly truth. "When I write," she confided, "I can shake off all my cares. My sorrow disappears, my spirits are revived!" But she could not shake off her capture and annihilation, and there are no diary entries to register and memorialize the snuffing of her spirit. Anne Frank was discovered, seized, and deported; she and her mother and sister and millions of others were extinguished in a program calculated to assure the cruellest and most demonically inventive human degradation. The atrocities she endured were ruthlessly and purposefully devised, from indexing by tattoo through systematic starvation to factory-efficient murder. She was designated to be erased from the living, to leave no grave, no sign, no physical trace of any kind. Her fault—her crime—was having been born a Jew, and as such she was classified among those who had no right to exist: not as a subject people, not as an inferior breed, not even as usable slaves. The military and civilian apparatus of an entire society was organized to obliterate her as a contaminant, in the way of a noxious and repellent insect. Zyklon B, the lethal fumigant poured into the gas chambers, was, pointedly, a roach poison.

Anne Frank escaped gassing. One month before liberation, not yet sixteen, she died of typhus fever, an acute infectious disease carried by lice. The precise date of her death has never been determined. She and her sister, Margot, were among three thousand six hundred and fifty-nine women transported by cattle car from Auschwitz to the merciless conditions of Bergen-Belsen, a barren tract of mud. In a cold, wet autumn, they suffered through nights on flooded straw in overcrowded tents, without light, surrounded by latrine ditches, until a violent hailstorm tore away what had passed for shelter. Weakened by brutality, chaos, and hunger, fifty thousand men and women—insufficiently clothed, tormented by lice—succumbed, many to the typhus epidemic.

Anne Frank's final diary entry, written on August 1, 1944, ends introspectively—a meditation on a struggle for moral transcendence set down in a mood of wistful gloom. It speaks of "turning my heart inside out, the bad part on the outside and the good part on the inside," and of "trying to find a way to become what I'd like to be and what I could be if . . . if only there were no other people in the world." Those curiously self-subduing ellipses are the diarist's own; they are more than merely a literary effect—they signify a child's muffled bleat against confinement, the last whimper of a prisoner in a cage. Her circumscribed world had a population of eleven—the three Dutch protectors who came and went, supplying the necessities of life, and

UPI/CORBIS-BETTMANN; OPPOSITE: THE GRANGER COLLECTION, N.Y.

the eight in hiding: the van Daans, their son Peter, Albert Dussel, and the four Franks. Five months earlier, on May 26, 1944, she had railed against the stress of living invisibly—a tension never relieved, she asserted, "not once in the two years we've been here. How much longer will this increasingly oppressive, unbearable weight press down on us?" And, several paragraphs on, "What will we do if we're ever . . . no, I mustn't write that down. But the question won't let itself be pushed to the back of my mind today; on the contrary, all the fear I've ever felt is looming before me in all its horror. . . . I've asked myself again and again whether it wouldn't have been better if we hadn't gone into hiding, if we were dead now and didn't have to go through this misery. . . . Let something happen soon. . . . Nothing can be more crushing than this anxiety. Let the end come, however cruel." And on April 11, 1944: "We are Jews in chains."

The diary is not a genial document, despite its author's often vividly satiric exposure of what she shrewdly saw as "the comical side of life in hiding." Its reputation for uplift is, to say it plainly, nonsensical. Anne Frank's written narrative, moreover, is not the story of Anne Frank, and never has been. That the diary is miraculous, a self-aware work of youthful genius, is not in question. Variety of pace and tone, insightful humor, insupportable suspense, adolescent love pangs and disappointments, sexual curiosity, moments of terror, moments of elation, flights of idealism and prayer and psychological acumen—all these elements of mind and feeling and skill brilliantly enliven its pages. There is, besides, a startlingly precocious comprehension of the progress of the war on all fronts. The survival of the little group in hiding is crucially linked to the timing of the Allied invasion. Overhead the bombers, roaring to their destinations, make the house quake; sometimes the bombs fall terrifyingly close. All in all, the diary is a chronicle of trepidation, turmoil, alarm. Even its report of quieter periods of reading and study express the hush of imprisonment. Meals are boiled lettuce and rotted potatoes; flushing the single toilet is forbidden for ten hours at a time. There is shooting at night. Betrayal and arrest always threaten. Anxiety and immobility rule. It is a story of fear.

But the diary in itself, richly crammed though it is with incident and passion, cannot count as Anne Frank's story. A story may not be said to be a story if the end is missing. And because the end is missing, the story of Anne Frank in the fifty years since "The Diary of a Young Girl" was first published has been bowdlerized, distorted, transmuted, traduced, reduced; it has been infantilized, Americanized, homogenized, sentimentalized; falsified, kitschified, and, in fact, blatantly and arrogantly denied. Among the falsifiers have been dramatists and directors, translators and litigators, Anne Frank's own father, and even—or especially—the public, both readers and theatregoers, all over the world. A deeply truth-telling work has been turned into an instrument of partial truth, surrogate truth, or anti-truth. The pure has been made impure—sometimes in the name of the reverse. Almost every hand that has approached the diary with the well-meaning intention of publicizing it has contributed to the subversion of history.

The diary is taken to be a Holocaust document; that is overridingly what it is not. Nearly every edition—and there have been innumerable editions—is emblazoned with words like "a song to life" or "a poignant delight in the infinite human spirit." Such characterizations rise up in the bitter perfume of mockery. A song to life? The diary is incomplete, truncated, broken off—or, rather, it is completed by Westerbork (the hellish transit camp in Holland from which Dutch Jews were deported), and by Auschwitz, and by the fatal winds of Bergen-Belsen. It is here, and not in the "secret annex," that the crimes we have come to call the Holocaust were enacted. Our entry into those crimes begins with columns of numbers: the meticulous lists of deportations, in handsome bookkeepers' handwriting, starkly set down in German "transport books." From these columns—headed, like goods for export, *"Ausgangs-Transporte nach dem Osten"* (outgoing shipments to the east)—it is possible to learn that Anne Frank and the others were moved to Auschwitz on the night of September 6, 1944, in a collection of a thousand and nineteen *Stücke* (or "pieces," another commodities term). That same night, five hundred and forty-nine persons were gassed, including one from the Frank group (the father of Peter van Daan) and every child under fifteen. Anne, at fifteen, and seventeen-year-old Margot were spared, apparently for labor. The end of October, from the twentieth to the twenty-eighth, saw the gassing of more than six thousand human beings within two hours of their arrival, including a thousand boys eighteen and under. In December, two thousand and ninety-three female prisoners perished, from starvation and exhaustion, in the women's camp; early in January, Edith Frank expired.

But Soviet forces were hurtling toward Auschwitz, and in November the order went out to conceal all evidences of gassing and to blow up the crematoria. Tens of thousands of inmates, debilitated and already near extinction, were driven out in bitter cold on death marches. Many were shot. In an evacuation that occurred either on October 28th or on November 2nd, Anne and Margot were dispatched to Bergen-Belsen. Margot was the first to succumb. A survivor recalled that she fell dead to the ground from the wooden slab on which she lay, eaten by lice, and that Anne, heartbroken and skeletal, naked under a bit of rag, died a day or two later.

To come to the diary without having earlier assimilated Elie Wiesel's "Night" and Primo Levi's "The Drowned and the Saved" (to mention two witnesses only), or the columns of figures in the transport books, is to allow oneself to stew in an implausible and ugly innocence. The litany of blurbs—"a lasting testament to the indestructible nobility of the human spirit," "an everlasting source of courage and inspiration"—is no more substantial than any other display of self-delusion. The success—the triumph—of Bergen-Belsen was precisely that it blotted out the possibility of courage, that it proved to be a lasting testament to the human spirit's easy destructibility. *"Hier ist kein Warum,"* a guard at Auschwitz warned: here there is no "why," neither question nor answer, only the dark of unreason. Anne Frank's story, truthfully told, is unredeemed and unredeemable.

These are notions that are hard to swallow—so they have not been swallowed. There are some, bored beyond toleration and callous enough to admit it, who are sick of hearing—yet again!—about depredations fifty years gone. "These old events," one of these fellows may complain, "can rake you over only so much. If I'm going to be lashed, I might as well save my skin for more recent troubles in the world." (I quote from a private letter from a distinguished author.) The more common response respectfully discharges an obligation to pity: it is dutiful. Or it is sometimes less than dutiful. It is sometimes frivolous, or indifferent, or presumptuous. But what even the most exemplary sympathies are likely to evade is the implacable recognition that Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, however sacramentally prodded, can never yield light.

THE vehicle that has most powerfully accomplished this almost universal obtuseness is Anne Frank's diary. In celebrating Anne Frank's years in the secret annex, the nature and meaning of her death has been, in effect, forestalled. The diary's keen lens is helplessly opaque to the diarist's explicit doom—and this opacity, replicated in young readers in particular, has led to shamelessness.

It is the shamelessness of appropriation. Who owns Anne Frank? The children of the world, say the sentimentalists. A case in point is the astonishing correspondence, published in 1995 under the title "Love, Otto," between Cara Wilson, a Californian born in 1944, and Otto Frank, the father of Anne Frank. Wilson, then twelve-year-old Cara Weiss, was invited by Twentieth Century Fox to audition for the part of Anne in a projected film version of the diary. "I didn't get the part," the middle-aged Wilson writes, "but by now I had found a whole new world. Anne Frank's diary, which I read and reread, spoke to me and my dilemmas, my anxieties, my secret passions. She felt the way I did.... I identified so strongly with this eloquent girl of my own age, that I now think I sort of became her in my own mind." And on what similarities does Wilson rest her acute sense of identification with a hunted child in hiding?

> I was miserable being me.... I was on the brink of that awful abyss of teenagedom and I, too, needed someone to talk to.... (Ironically, Anne, too, expressed a longing for more attention from her father.) ... Dad's whole life was a series of meetings. At home, he was too tired or too frustrated to unload on. I had something else in common with Anne. We both had to share with sisters who were prettier and smarter than we felt we were.... Despite the monumental differences in our situations, to this day I feel that Anne helped me get through the teens with a sense of inner focus. She spoke for me. She was strong for me. She had so much hope when I was ready to call it quits.

A sampling of Wilson's concerns as she matured appears in the interstices of her exchanges with Otto Frank, which, remarkably, date from 1959 until his death, in 1980. For instance: "The year was 1968—etched in my mind. I can't ever forget it. Otis Redding was 'Sittin' on the Dock of the Bay' . . . while we hummed along to 'Hey Jude' by the Beatles." "In 1973-74," she reports, "I was wearing headbands, pukka-shell necklaces, and American Indian anything. Tattoos were a rage"—but enough. Tattoos were the rage, she neglects to recall, in Auschwitz; and of the Auschwitz survivor who was her patient correspondent for more than two decades, Wilson remarks, "Well, what choice did the poor man have? Whenever an attack of 'I-can't-take-this-any-longer' would hit me, I'd put it all into lengthy diatribes to my distant guru, Otto Frank."

That the designated guru replied, year after year, to embarrassing and shabby effusions like these may open a new pathway into our generally obscure understanding of the character of Otto Frank. His responses—from Basel, where he had settled with his second wife—were consistently attentive, formal, kindly. When Wilson gave birth, he sent her a musical toy, and he faithfully offered a personal word about her excitements as she supplied them: her baby sons, her dance lessons, her husband's work on commercials, her freelance writing. But his letters were also political and serious. It is good, he wrote in October, 1970, to take "an active part in trying to abolish injustices and all sorts of grievances, but we cannot follow your views regarding the Black Panthers." And in

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"First you must see Dr. Ta, and then you must see Dr. Ra Ra, and after that you may see Dr. Boom T. Ay."

"Yo! My man! Who be needin' 'Ariadne auf Naxos' tickets?"

December, 1973, "As you can imagine, we were highly shocked about the unexpected attack of the Arabs on Israel on Yom Kippur and are now mourning with all those who lost members of their families." Presumably he knew something about losing a family. Wilson, insouciantly sliding past these faraway matters, was otherwise preoccupied, "finding our little guys sooo much fun."

The unabashed triflings of Cara Wilson—whose "identification" with Anne Frank can be duplicated by the thousand, though she may be more audacious than most—point to a conundrum. Never mind that the intellectual distance between Wilson and Anne Frank is immeasurable; not every self-conscious young girl will be a prodigy. Did Otto Frank not comprehend that Cara Wilson was deaf to everything the loss of his daughter represented? Did he not see, in Wilson's letters alone, how a denatured approach to the diary might serve to promote amnesia of what was rapidly turning into history? A protected domestic space, however threatened and endangered, can, from time to time, mimic ordinary life. The young who are encouraged to embrace the diary cannot always be expected to feel the difference between the mimicry and the threat. And (like Cara Wilson) most do not. Natalie Portman, sixteen years old, who will début as Anne Frank in the Broadway revival this December of the famous play based on the diary—a play that has itself influenced the way the diary is read—concludes from her own reading that "it's funny, it's hopeful, and she's a happy person."

Otto Frank, it turns out, is complicit in this shallowly upbeat view. Again and again, in every conceivable context, he had it as his aim to emphasize "Anne's idealism," "Anne's spirit," almost never calling attention to how and why that idealism and spirit were smothered, and unfailingly generalizing the sources of hatred. If the child is father of the man—if childhood shapes future sensibility—then Otto Frank, despite his sufferings in Auschwitz, may have had less in common with his own daughter than he was ready to recognize. As the diary gained publication in country after country, its renown accelerating year by year, he spoke not merely about but for its author—and who, after all, would have a greater right? The surviving father stood in for the dead child, believing that his words would honestly represent hers. He was scarcely entitled to such certainty: fatherhood does not confer surrogacy.

Otto Frank's own childhood, in Frankfurt, Germany, was wholly unclouded. A banker's son, he lived untrammelled until the rise of the Nazi regime, when he was already forty-four. At nineteen, in order to acquire training in business, he went to New York with Nathan Straus, a fellow-student and an heir to the Macy's department-store fortune. During the First World War, Frank was an officer in the German military, and in 1925 he married Edith Holländer, a manufacturer's daughter. Margot was born in 1926 and Anneliese Marie, called Anne, in 1929. His characteristically secular world view belonged to an era of quiet assimilation, or, more accurately, accommodation (which includes a modicum of deference), when German Jews had become, at least in their own minds, well integrated into German society. From birth, Otto Frank had breathed the free air of the affluent bourgeoisie.

Anne's childhood, by contrast, fell into shadows almost immediately. She was not yet four when the German persecutions of Jews began, and from then until the anguished close of her days she lived as a refugee and a victim. In 1933, the family fled from Germany to Holland, where Frank had commercial connections, and where he established a pectin business. By 1940, the Germans had occupied the Netherlands. In Amsterdam, Jewish children, Anne among them, were thrown out of the public-school system and made to wear the yellow star. At thirteen, on November 19, 1942, already in hiding, Anne Frank could write:

> In the evenings when it's dark, I often see long lines of good, innocent people accompanied by crying children, walking on and on, ordered about by a handful of men who bully and beat them until they nearly drop. No one is spared. The sick, the elderly, children, babies, and pregnant women—all are marched to their death.

And earlier, on October 9th, after hearing the report of an escape from Westerbork:

> Our many Jewish friends and acquaintances are being taken away in droves. The Gestapo is treating them very roughly and transporting them in cattle cars to Westerbork. . . . The people get almost nothing to eat, much less to drink, as water is available only one hour a day, and there's only one toilet and sink for several thousand people. Men and women sleep in the same room, and women and children often have their heads shaved. . . . If it's that bad in Holland,

> what must it be like in those faraway and uncivilized places where the Germans are sending them? We assume that most of them are being murdered. The English radio says they're being gassed.

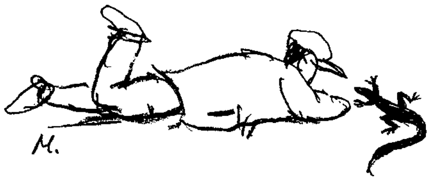
Perhaps not even a father is justified in thinking he can distill the "ideas" of this alert and sorrowing child, with scenes such as these inscribed in her psyche, and with the desolations of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen still ahead. His preference was to accentuate what he called Anne's "optimistical view on life." Yet the diary's most celebrated line (infamously celebrated, one might add)—"I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart"—has been torn out of its bed of thorns. Two sentences later (and three weeks before she was seized and shipped to Westerbork), the diarist sets down a vision of darkness:

> I see the world being slowly transformed into a wilderness, I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions. . . . In the meantime, I must hold on to my ideals. Perhaps the day will come when I'll be able to realize them!

Because that day never came, both Miep Gies, the selflessly courageous woman who devoted herself to the sustenance of those in hiding, and Hannah Goslar, Anne's Jewish schoolmate and the last to hear her tremulous cries in Bergen-Belsen, objected to Otto Frank's emphasis on the diary's "truly good at heart" utterance. That single sentence has become, universally, Anne Frank's message, virtually her motto—whether or not such a credo could have survived the camps. Why should this sentence be taken as emblematic, and not, for example, another? "There's a destructive urge in people, the urge to rage, murder, and kill," Anne wrote on May 3, 1944, pondering the spread of guilt. These are words that do not soften, ameliorate, or give the lie to the pervasive horror of her time. Nor do they pull the wool over the eyes of history.

Otto Frank grew up with a social need to please his environment and not to offend it; that was the condition of entering the mainstream, a bargain German Jews negotiated with themselves. It was more dignified, and safer, to praise than to blame. Far better, then, in facing the larger postwar world that the diary had opened to him, to speak of goodness rather than destruction: so much of that larger world had participated in the urge to rage. (The diary notes how Dutch anti-Semitism, "to our great sorrow and dismay," was increasing even as the Jews were being hauled away.) After the liberation of the camps, the heaps of emaciated corpses were accusation enough. Postwar sensibility hastened to migrate elsewhere, away from the cruel and the culpable. It was a tone and a mood that affected the diary's reception; it was a mood and a tone that, with cautious yet crucial excisions, the diary itself could be made to support. And so the diarist's dread came to be described as hope, her terror as courage, her prayers of despair as inspiring. And since the diary was now defined as a Holocaust document, the perception of the cataclysm itself was being subtly accommodated to expressions like "man's inhumanity to man," diluting and befogging specific historical events and their motives. "We must not flog the past," Frank insisted in 1969. His concrete response to the past was the establishment, in 1957, of the Anne Frank Foundation and its offshoot the International Youth Center, situated in the Amsterdam house where the diary was composed, to foster "as many contacts as possible between young people of different nationalities, races and religions"—a civilized and tenderhearted goal that nevertheless washed away into do-gooder abstraction the explicit urge to rage that had devoured his daughter.

OTTO FRANK was merely an accessory to the transformation of the diary from one kind of witness to another kind: from the painfully revealing to the partially concealing. If Anne Frank has been made into what we nowadays call an "icon," it is because of the Pulitzer Prize-winning play derived from the diary—a play that rapidly achieved worldwide popularity, and framed the legend even the newest generation has come to believe in. Adapted by Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich, a Hollywood husband-and-wife screenwriting team, the theatricalized version opened on Broadway in 1955, ten years after the end of the war, and its portrayal of the "funny, hopeful, happy" Anne continues to reverberate, not only in how the diary is construed but in how the Holocaust itself is understood. The play was a work born in controversy, destined to roil on and on in rancor and litigation. Its tangle of contending lawyers finally came to resemble nothing so much as the knotted imbroglio of Jarndyce vs. Jarndyce, the unending court case of "Bleak House." Many of the chief figures in the protracted conflict over the Hacketts' play have by now left the scene, but the principal issues, far from fading away, have, after so many decades, intensified. Whatever the ramifications of these issues, whatever perspectives they illumine or defy, the central question stands fast: Who owns Anne Frank?



The hero, or irritant (depending on which side of the controversy one favors), in the genesis of the diary's dramatization was Meyer Levin, a Chicago-born novelist of the social-realist school, the author of such fairly successful works as "The Old Bunch," "Compulsion," and "The Settlers." Levin began as a man of the left, though a strong anti-Stalinist: he was drawn to proletarian fiction ("Citizens," about steelworkers), and had gone to Spain in the thirties to report on the Civil War. In 1945, as a war correspondent attached to the Fourth Armored Division, he was among the first Americans to enter Buchenwald, Dachau, and Bergen-Belsen. What he saw there was ungraspable and unendurable. "As I groped in the first weeks, beginning to apprehend the monstrous shape of the story I would have to tell," he wrote, "I knew already that I would never penetrate its heart of bile, for the magnitude of this horror seemed beyond human register." The truest telling, he affirmed, would have to rise up out of the mouth of a victim.

His "obsession," as he afterward called it—partly in mockery of the opposition his later views evoked—had its beginning in those repeated scenes of piled-up bodies as he investigated camp after camp. From then on, he could be said to carry the mark of Abel. He dedicated himself to helping the survivors get to Mandate Palestine, a goal that Britain had made illegal. In 1946, he reported from Tel Aviv on the uprising against British rule, and during the next two years he produced a pair of films on the struggles of the survivors to reach Palestine. In 1950, he published "In Search," an examination of the effects of the European cataclysm on his experience and sensibility as an American Jew. (Thomas Mann acclaimed the book as "a human document of high order, written by a witness of our fantastic epoch whose gaze remained both clear and steady.") Levin's intensifying focus on the Jewish condition in the twentieth century grew more and more heated, and when his wife, the novelist Tereska Torres, handed him the French edition of the diary (it had previously appeared only in Dutch) he felt he had found what he had thirsted after: a voice crying up from the ground, an authentic witness to the German onslaught.

He acted instantly. He sent Otto Frank a copy of "In Search" and in effect offered his services as an unofficial agent to secure British and American publication, asserting his distance from any financial gain; his interest, he said, was purely "one of sympathy." He saw in the diary the possibility of "a very touching play or film," and asked Frank's permission to explore the idea. Frank at first avoided reading Levin's book, saturated as it was in passions and commitments so foreign to his own susceptibilities. He was not unfamiliar with Levin's preoccupations; he had seen and liked one of his films. He encouraged Levin to go ahead—though a dramatization, he observed, would perforce "be rather different from the real contents" of the diary. Hardly so, Levin protested: no compromise would be needed; all the diarist's thoughts could be preserved.

The "real contents" had already been altered by Frank himself, and understandably, given the propriety of his own background and of the times. The diary contained, here and there, intimate adolescent musings, talk of how contraceptives work, and explicit anatomical description: "In the upper part, between the outer labia, there's a fold of skin that, on second thought, looks like a kind of blister. That's the clitoris. Then come the inner labia . . ." All this Frank edited out. He also omitted passages recording his daughter's angry resistance to the nervous fussiness of her mother ("the most rotten person in the world"). Undoubtedly he better understood Edith Frank's protective tremors, and was unwilling to perpetuate a negative portrait. Beyond this, he deleted numerous expressions of religious faith, a direct reference to Yom Kippur, terrified reports of Germans seizing Jews in Amsterdam. It was prudence, prudishness, and perhaps his own deracinated temperament that stimulated many of these tamperings. In 1991, eleven years after Frank's death, a "definitive edition" of the diary restored everything he had expurgated. But the image of Anne Frank as merry innocent and steadfast idealist—an image the play vividly promoted—was by then ineradicable.

A subsequent bowdlerization, in 1950, was still more programmatic, and crossed over even more seriously into the area of Levin's concern for uncompromised faithfulness. The German edition's translator, Anneliese Schütz, in order to mask or soft-pedal German culpability, went about methodically blurring every hostile reference to Germans and German. Anne's parodic list of house rules, for instance, included "*Use of language:* It is necessary to speak softly at all times. Only the language of civilized people may be spoken, thus no German." The German translation reads, "*Alle Kultursprachen . . . aber leise!*"—"all civilized languages . . . but softly!" "Heroism in the war or when confronting the Germans" is dissolved into "heroism in the war and in the struggle against oppression." ("A book intended after all for sale in Germany," Schütz explained, "cannot abuse the Germans.") The diarist's honest cry, in the midst of a vast persecution, that "there is no greater hostility than exists between Germans and Jews" became, in Schütz's version, "there is no greater hostility in the world than between these Germans and Jews!" Frank agreed to the latter change because, he said, it was what his daughter had really meant: she "by no means measured all Germans by the same yardstick. For, as she knew so well, even in those days we had many good friends among the Germans." But this guarded accommodationist view is Otto Frank's own; it is nowhere in the diary. Even more striking than Frank's readiness to accede to such misrepresentations is the fact that for forty-one years (until a more accurate translation appeared) no reader of the diary in German had ever known an intact text.

In contemplating a dramatization and pledging no compromise, Levin told Frank he would do it "tenderly and with utmost fidelity." He was clear about what he meant by fidelity. In his eyes the diary was conscious testimony to Jewish faith and suffering; and it was this, and this nearly alone, that defined for him its psychological, historical, and metaphysical genuineness, and its significance for the

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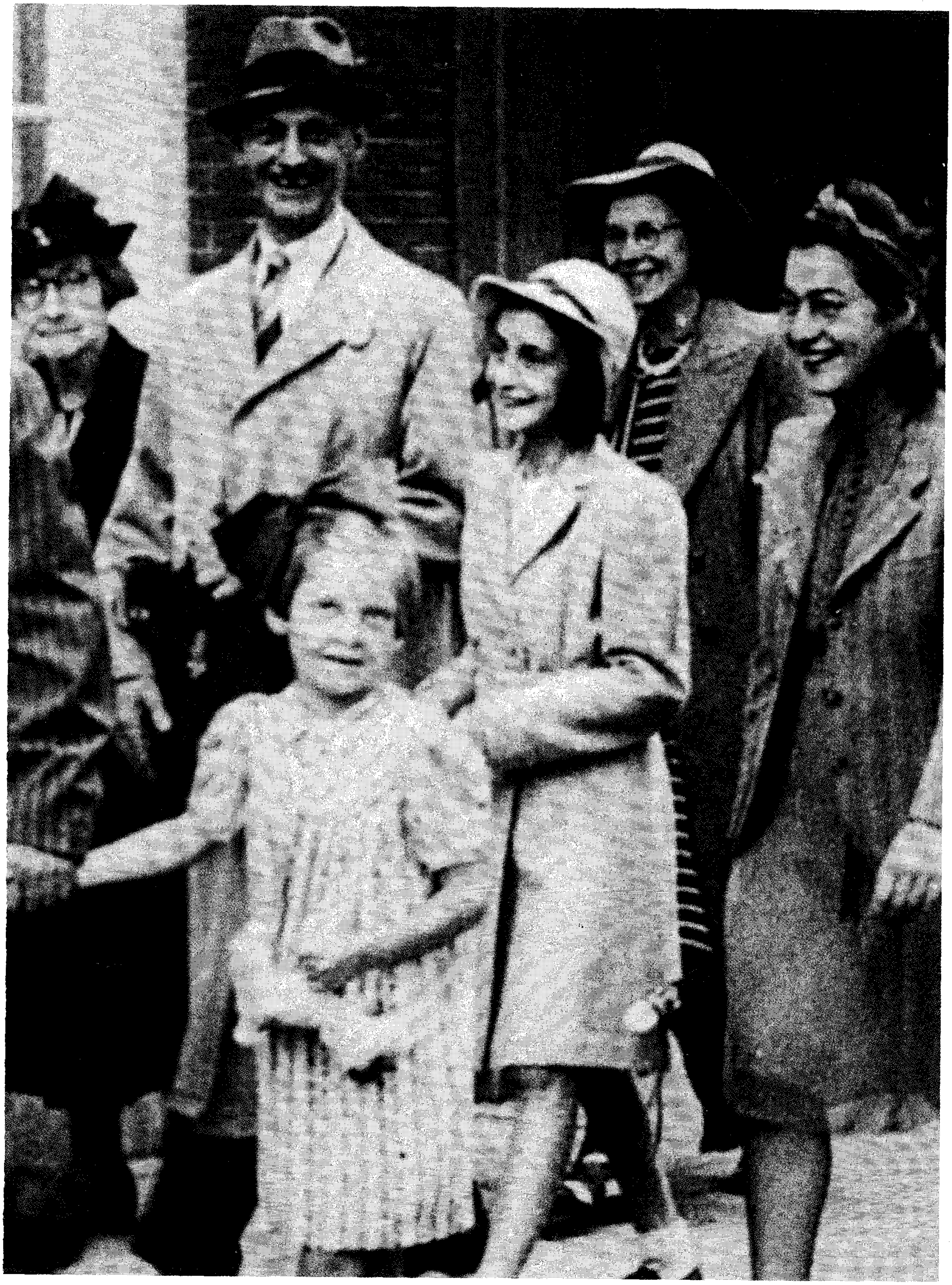
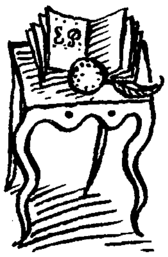
Otto Frank confessed that his daughter's dia
falsified it further. Anne Fra



de him feel he "did not know" her, but that did not stop him from altering the diary before publication and approving a play that
white hat, walking between her sister and her father on the way to a friend's wedding in Amsterdam in 1941.

world. With these convictions foremost, Levin went in search of a theatrical producer. At the same time, he was unflagging in pressing for publication; but the work was meanwhile slowly gaining independent notice. Janet Flanner, in her "Letter from Paris" in *The New Yorker* of November 11, 1950, noted the French publication of a book by "a precocious, talented little Frankfurt Jewess"—apparently oblivious of the unpleasant echoes, post-Hitler, of "Jewess." Sixteen English-language publishers on both sides of the Atlantic had already rejected the diary when Levin succeeded in placing it with Valentine Mitchell, a London firm. His negotiations with a Boston house were still incomplete when Doubleday came forward to secure publication rights directly from Frank. Relations between Levin and Frank were, as usual, warm; Frank repeatedly thanked Levin for his efforts to further the fortunes of the diary, and Levin continued under the impression that Frank would support him as the playwright of choice.

If a front-page review in the New York *Times Book Review* can rocket a book to instant sanctity, that is what Meyer Levin, in the spring of 1952, achieved for "Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl." It was an assignment he had gone after avidly. Barbara Zimmerman (afterward Barbara Epstein, a founder of *The New York Review of Books*), the diary's young editor at Doubleday, had earlier recognized its potential as "a minor classic," and had enlisted Eleanor Roosevelt to supply an introduction. (According to Levin, it was ghost-written by Zimmerman.) Levin now joined Zimmerman and Doubleday in the project of choosing a producer. Doubleday was to take over as Frank's official agent, with the stipulation that Levin would have an active hand in the adaptation. "I think that I can honestly say," Levin wrote Frank, "that I am as well qualified as any other writer for this particular task." In a cable to Doubleday, Frank appeared to agree: "DESIRE LEVIN AS WRITER OR COLLABORATOR IN ANY TREATMENT TO GUARANTEE IDEA OF BOOK." The catch, it would develop, lurked in a perilous contingency: Whose idea? Levin's? Frank's? The producer's? The director's? In any case, Doubleday was already doubtful about Levin's ambiguous role: What if an interested producer decided on another playwright?



What happened next—an avalanche of furies and recriminations lasting years—has lately become the subject of a pair of arresting discussions of the Frank-Levin affair. And if "affair" suggests an event on the scale of the Dreyfus case, that is how Levin saw it: as an unjust stripping away of his rightful position, with implications far beyond his personal predicament. "An Obsession with Anne Frank," by Lawrence Graver, published by the University of California Press in 1995, is the first study to fashion a coherent narrative out of the welter of claims, counterclaims, letters, cables, petitions, polemics, and rumbling confusions which accompany any examination of the diary's journey to the stage. "The Stolen Legacy of Anne Frank," by Ralph Melnick, out just now from Yale, is denser in detail and in sources than its predecessor, and more insistent in tone. Both are accomplished works of scholarship that converge on the facts and diverge in their conclusions. Graver is reticent with his sympathies; Melnick is Levin's undisguised advocate. Graver finds no villains; Melnick finds Lillian Hellman.

Always delicately respectful of Frank's dignity and rights—and always mindful of the older man's earlier travail—Levin had promised that he would step aside if a more prominent playwright, someone "world famous," should appear. Stubbornly and confidently, he went on toiling over his own version. As a novelist, he was under suspicion of being unable to write drama. (In after years, when he had grown deeply bitter, he listed, in retaliation, "Sartre, Gorky, Galsworthy, Steinbeck, Wilder!") Though there are many extant drafts of Levin's play, no definitive script is available; both publication and performance were proscribed by Frank's attorneys. A script staged without authorization by the Israel Soldiers' Theatre in 1966 sometimes passes from hand to hand, and reads well: moving, theatrical, actable, professional. This later work was not, however, the script submitted in the summer of 1952 to Cheryl Crawford, one of a number of Broadway producers who rushed in with bids in the wake of the diary's acclaim. Crawford, an eminent co-founder of the Actors Studio, initially encouraged Levin, offering him first consideration and, if his script was not entirely satisfactory, the aid of a more experienced collaborator. Then—virtually overnight—she rejected his draft outright. Levin was bewildered and infuriated, and from then on he became an intractable and indefatigable warrior on behalf of his play—and on behalf, he contended, of the diary's true meaning. In his *Times* review he had summed it up stirringly as the voice of "six million vanished Jewish souls."

Doubleday, meanwhile, sensing complications ahead, had withdrawn as Frank's theatrical agent, finding Levin's presence—injected by Frank—too intrusive, too maverick, too independent and entrepreneurial: fixed, they believed, only on his own interest, which was to stick to his insistence on the superiority of his work over all potential contenders. Frank, too, had begun—kindly, politely, and with tireless assurances of his gratitude to Levin—to move closer to Doubleday's cooler views, especially as urged by Barbara Zimmerman. She was twenty-four years old, the age Anne would have been, very intelligent and attentive. Adoring letters flowed back and forth between them, Frank addressing her as "little Barbara" and "dearest little one." On one occasion he gave her an antique gold pin. About Levin, Zimmerman finally concluded that he was "impossible to deal with in any terms, officially, legally, morally, personally"—a "compulsive neurotic . . . destroying both himself and Anne's play." (There was, of course, no such entity as "Anne's play.")

What had caused Crawford to change her mind so precipitately? She had given Levin's script for further consideration to Lillian Hellman and to the producers Robert Whitehead and Kermit Bloomgarden. All were theatre luminaries; all spurned Levin's work. Frank's confidence in Levin, already much diminished, failed altogether. Advised by Doubleday, he put his trust in the Broadway professionals, while Levin fought on alone. Famous names—Maxwell Anderson, John Van Druten, Carson McCullers—came and went. Crawford herself ultimately pulled out, fearing a lawsuit by Levin. In the end—with the vigilant Levin still agitating loudly and publicly for the primacy of his work—Kermit Bloomgarden surfaced as producer and Garson Kanin

"Since I retired, I've been doing some part-time consulting for a younger predators' group."

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as director. Hellman had recommended Bloomgarden; she had also recommended Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett. The Hacketts had a long record of Hollywood hits, from "Father of the Bride" to "It's a Wonderful Life," and they had successfully scripted a series of lighthearted musicals. Levin was appalled—had his sacred vision been pushed aside not for the awaited world-famous dramatist but for a pair of frivolous screen drudges, mere "hired hands"?

The hired hands were earnest and reverent. They began at once to read up on European history, Judaism, and Jewish practice; they consulted a rabbi. They corresponded eagerly with Frank, looking to satisfy his expectations. They travelled to Amsterdam and visited 263 Prinsengracht, the house on the canal where the Franks, the van Daans, and Dussel had been hidden. They met Johannes Kleiman, who, together with Victor Kugler and Miep Gies, had taken over the management of Frank's business in order to conceal and protect him and his family in the house behind. Reacting to the Hacketts' lifelong remoteness from Jewish subject matter, Levin took out an ad in the New York *Post* attacking Bloomgarden and asking that his play be given a hearing. "My work," he wrote, "has been with the Jewish story. I tried to dramatize the Diary as Anne would have, in her own words. . . . I feel my work has earned the right to be judged by you, the public." "Ridiculous and laughable," said Bloomgarden. Appealing to the critic Brooks Atkinson, Levin complained—extravagantly, outrageously—that his play was being "killed by the same arbitrary disregard that brought an end to Anne and six million others." Frank stopped answering Levin's letters; many he returned unopened.

The Hacketts, too, in their earliest drafts, were devotedly "with the Jewish story." Grateful to Hellman for getting them the job, and crushed by Bloomgarden's acute dislike of their efforts so far, they flew to Martha's Vineyard weekend after weekend to receive advice from Hellman. "She was amazing," Goodrich crowed, happy to comply. Hellman's slant—and that of Bloomgarden and Kanin—was consistently in a direction opposed to Levin's. Where the diary touched on Anne's consciousness of Jewish fate or faith, they quietly erased the reference or changed its emphasis. Whatever was specific they made generic. The sexual tenderness between Anne and the young Peter van Daan was moved to the forefront. Comedy overwhelmed darkness. Anne became an all-American girl, an echo of the perky character in "Junior Miss," a popular play of the previous decade. The Zionist aspirations of Margot, Anne's sister, disappeared. The one liturgical note, a Hanukkah ceremony, was absurdly defined in terms of local contemporary habits ("eight days of presents"); a jolly jingle replaced the traditional "Rock of Ages," with its sombre allusions to historic travail. (Kanin had insisted on something "spirited and gay," so as not to give "the wrong feeling entirely." "Hebrew," he argued, "would simply alienate the audience.")

Astonishingly, the Nazified notion of "race" leaped out in a line attributed to Hellman and nowhere present in the diary. "We're not the only people that've had to suffer," the Hacketts' Anne says. "There've always been people that've had to . . . sometimes one race . . . sometimes another." This pallid speech, yawning with vagueness, was conspicuously opposed to the pivotal reflection it was designed to betray:

> In the eyes of the world, we're doomed, but if after all this suffering, there are still Jews left, the Jewish people will be held up as an example. Who knows, maybe our religion will teach the world and all the people in it about goodness, and that's the reason, the only reason, we have to suffer. . . . God has never deserted our people. Through the ages Jews have had to suffer, but through the ages they've gone on living, and the centuries of suffering have only made them stronger.

For Kanin, this kind of rumination was "an embarrassing piece of special pleading. . . . The fact that in this play the symbols of persecution and oppression are Jews is incidental, and Anne, in stating the argument so, reduces her magnificent stature." And so it went throughout. The particularized plight of Jews in hiding was vaporized into what Kanin called "the infinite." Reality—the diary's central condition—was "incidental." The passionately contemplative child, brooding on concrete evil, was made into an emblem of evasion. Her history had a habitation and a name; the infinite was nameless and nowhere.

For Levin, the source and first cause of these excisions was Lillian Hellman. Hellman, he believed, had "supervised" the Hacketts, and Hellman was fundamentally political and inflexibly doctrinaire. Her outlook lay at the root of a conspiracy. She was an impenitent Stalinist; she followed, he said, the Soviet line. Like the Soviets, she was anti-Zionist. And, just as the Soviets had obliterated Jewish particularity at Babi

Yar, the ravine where thousands of Jews, shot by the Germans, lay unnamed and effaced in their deaths, so Hellman had directed the Hacketts to blur the identity of the characters in the play.

The sins of the Soviets and the sins of Hellman and her Broadway deputies were, in Levin's mind, identical. He set out to punish the man who had allowed all this to come to pass: Otto Frank had allied himself with the pundits of erasure; Otto Frank had stood aside when Levin's play was elbowed out of the way. What recourse remained for a man so affronted and injured? Meyer Levin sued Otto Frank. It was as if, someone observed, a suit were being brought against the father of Joan of Arc. The bulky snarl of courtroom arguments resulted in small satisfaction for Levin: because the structure of the Hacketts' play was in some ways similar to his, the jury detected plagiarism; yet even this limited triumph foundered on the issue of damages. Levin sent out broadsides, collected signatures, summoned a committee of advocacy, lectured from pulpits, took out ads, rallied rabbis and writers (Norman Mailer among them). He wrote "The Obsession," his grandly confessional "J'Accuse," rehearsing, in skirmish after skirmish, his fight for the staging of his own adaptation. In return, furious charges flew at him: he was a red-baiter, a McCarthyite. The term "paranoid" began to circulate. Why rant against the popularization and dilution that was Broadway's lifeblood? "I certainly have no wish to inflict depression on an audience," Kanin had argued. "I don't consider that a legitimate theatrical end." (So much for "Hamlet" and "King Lear.")

Grateful for lightness, reviewers agreed. What they came away from was the charm of Susan Strasberg as a radiant Anne, and Joseph Schildkraut in the role of a wise and steadying Otto Frank, whom the actor engagingly resembled. "Anne is not going to her death; she is going to leave a dent on life, and let death take what's left," Walter Kerr, on a mystical note, wrote in the *Herald Tribune*. *Variety* seemed relieved that the play avoided "hating the Nazis, hating what they did to millions of innocent people," and instead came off as "glowing, moving, frequently humorous," with "just about everything one could wish for. It is not grim." The *Daily News* confirmed what Kanin had striven for: "Not in any important sense a Jewish play. . . . Anne Frank is a Little Orphan Annie brought into vibrant life." Audiences laughed and were charmed; but they were also dazed and moved.

And audiences multiplied: the Hacketts' drama went all over the world—including Israel, where numbers of survivors were remaking their lives—and was everywhere successful. The play's reception in Germany was especially noteworthy. In an impressive and thoroughgoing essay entitled "Popularization and Memory," Alvin Rosenfeld, a professor of English at Indiana University, recounts the development of the Anne Frank phenomenon in the country of her birth. "The theater reviews of the time," Rosenfeld reports, "tell of audiences sitting in stunned silence at the play and leaving the performance unable to speak or to look one another in the eye." These were self-conscious and thin-skinned audiences; in the Germany of the fifties, theatregoers still belonged to the generation of the Nazi era. (On Broadway, Kanin had unblinkingly engaged Gusti Huber, of that same generation, to play Anne Frank's mother. As a member of the Nazi Actors Guild until Germany's defeat, Huber had early on disparaged "non-Aryan artists.") But the strange muteness in theatres may have derived not so much from guilt or shame as from an all-encompassing compassion; or call it self-pity. "We see in Anne Frank's fate," a German drama critic offered, "our own fate—the tragedy of human existence per se." Hannah Arendt, philosopher and Hitler refugee, scorned such oceanic expressions, calling it "cheap sentimentality at the expense of a great catastrophe." And Bruno Bettelheim, a survivor of Dachau and Buchenwald, condemned the play's most touted line: "If all men are good, there was never an Auschwitz." A decade after the fall of Nazism, the spirited and sanitized young girl of the play became a vehicle for German communal identification—with the victim, not the persecutors—and, according to Rosenfeld, a continuing "symbol of moral and intellectual convenience." The Anne Frank whom thousands saw in seven openings in seven cities "spoke affirmatively about life and not accusingly

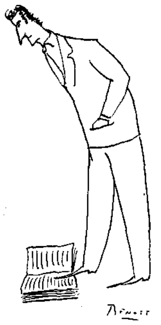
"He's clean."

about her torturers." No German in uniform appeared onstage. "In a word," Rosenfeld concludes, "Anne Frank has become a ready-at-hand formula for easy forgiveness."

THE mood of consolation lingers on, as Otto Frank meant it to—and not only in Germany, where, even after fifty years, the issue is touchiest. Sanctified and absolving, shorn of darkness, Anne Frank remains in all countries a revered and comforting figure in the contemporary mind. In Japan, because both diary and play mention first menstruation, "Anne Frank" has become a code word among teen-agers for getting one's period. In Argentina in the seventies, church publications began to link her with Roman Catholic martyrdom. "Commemoration," the French cultural critic Tzvetan Todorov explains, "is always the adaptation of memory to the needs of today."

But there is a note that drills deeper than commemoration: it goes to the idea of identification. To "identify with" is to become what one is not, to become what one is not is to usurp, to usurp is to own—and who, after all, in the half century since Miep Gies retrieved the scattered pages of the diary, really owns Anne Frank? Who can speak for her? Her father, who, after reading the diary and confessing that he "did not know" her, went on to tell us what he thought she meant? Meyer Levin, who claimed to be her authentic voice—so much so that he dared to equate the dismissal of his work, however ignobly motivated, with Holocaust annihilation? Hellman, Bloomgarden, Kanin, whose interpretations clung to a collective ideology of human interchangeability? (In discounting the significance of the Jewish element, Kanin had asserted that "people have suffered because of being English, French, German, Italian, Ethiopian, Mohammedan, Negro, and so on"—as if this were not all the more reason to comprehend and particularize each history.) And what of Cara Wilson and "the children of the world," who have reduced the persecution of a people to the trials of adolescence?

All these appropriations, whether cheaply personal or densely ideological, whether seen as exalting or denigrating, have contributed to the conversion of Anne Frank into usable goods. There is no authorized version other than the diary itself, and even this has been brought into question by the Holocaust-denial industry—in part a spinoff of the Anne Frank industry—which labels the diary a forgery. One charge is that Otto Frank wrote it himself, to make money. (Scurrilities like these necessitated the issuance, in 1986, of a Critical Edition by the Netherlands State Institute for War Documentation, including forensic evidence of handwriting and ink—a defensive hence sorrowful volume.)



No play can be judged wholly from what is on the page; a play has evocative powers beyond the words. Still, the Hacketts' work, read today, is very much a conventionally well made Broadway product of the fifties, alternating comical beats with scenes of alarm, a love story with a theft, wisdom with buffoonery. The writing is skilled and mediocre, not unlike much of contemporary commercial theatre. Yet this is the play that electrified audiences everywhere, that became a reverential if robotlike film, and that—far more than the diary—invented the world's Anne Frank. Was it the play, or was it the times? The upcoming revival of the Hacketts' dramatization—promising revisions incorporating passages Otto Frank deleted from the diary—will no doubt stimulate all the old quarrelsome issues yet again. But with the Second World War and the Holocaust receding, especially for the young, into distant fable—no different from tales, say, of Attila the Hun—the revival enters an environment psychologically altered from that of the 1955 production. At the same time, Holocaust scholarship—survivor memoirs, oral histories, wave after wave of fresh documentation and analysis—has increased prodigiously. At Harvard, for instance, under the rubric "reception studies," a young scholar named Alex Sagan, a relative of the late astronomer, is examining the ways Anne Frank has been transmuted into, among other cultural manifestations, a heavenly body. And Steven Spielberg's "Schindler's List," about a Nazi industrialist as savior, has left its mark.

It may be, though, that a new production, even now, and even with cautious additions, will be heard in the play's original voice. It was always a voice of good will; it meant, as we say, well—and, financially, it certainly did well. But it was Broadway's style of good will, and that, at least for Meyer Levin, had the scent of ill. For him, and signally for Bloomgarden and Kanin, the most sensitive point—the focus of trouble—lay in the ancient dispute between the particular and the universal. All that was a distraction from the heart of the matter: in a drama about hiding, evil was hidden. And if the play remains essentially as the Hacketts wrote it, the likelihood is that Anne Frank's real history will hardly prevail over what was experienced, forty years ago, as history transcended, ennobled, rarefied. The first hint is already in the air, puffed by the play's young lead: *It's funny, it's hopeful, and she's a happy person.*

Evisceration, an elegy for the murdered. Evisceration by blurb and stage, by shrewdness and naïveté, by cowardice and spirituality, by forgiveness and indifference, by success and money, by vanity and rage, by principle and passion, by surrogacy and affinity. Evisceration by fame, by shame, by blame. By uplift and transcendence. By usurpation.

ON Friday, August 4, 1944, the day of the arrest, Miep Gies climbed the stairs to the hiding place and found it ransacked and wrecked. The beleaguered little band had been betrayed by an informer who was paid seven and a half guilders—about a dollar—for each person: sixty guilders for the lot. Miep Gies picked up what she recognized as Anne's papers and put them away, unread, in her desk drawer. There the diary lay untouched, until Otto Frank emerged alive from Auschwitz. "Had I read it," she said afterward, "I would have had to burn the diary because it would have been too dangerous for people about whom Anne had written." It was Miep Gies—the uncommon heroine of this story, a woman profoundly good, a failed savior—who succeeded in rescuing an irreplaceable masterwork. It may be shocking to think this (I am shocked as I think it), but one can imagine a still more salvational outcome: Anne Frank's diary burned, vanished, lost—saved from a world that made of it all things, some of them true, while floating lightly over the heavier truth of named and inhabited evil. ♦

PERSONAL HISTORY

PROMPTING THE PRESIDENT

When Ronald Reagan wrote his memoirs, his editor discovered that the President had left a few things out.

BY MICHAEL KORDA

In the annals of publishing, few categories are so littered with expensive failures as that of the Presidential memoir. There are exceptions, of course; Ulysses S. Grant's memoirs remain among the all-time American best-sellers, but Grant's book was about the Civil War, not the Presidency, and should therefore be compared with Dwight D. Eisenhower's enormously successful "Crusade in Europe," as opposed to Eisenhower's much less successful Presidential memoir.

Grant was also one of the few Presidents in American history who actually sat down on the front porch with a pad of paper and wrote his own book—under difficult circumstances, too, since he was writing against the clock, dying of throat cancer, and in great pain. Mark Twain was Grant's editor and publisher, but Grant wrote every word of his book himself, and accepted Twain's suggestions for revisions with remarkable patience and grace.

Since then, Presidential memoirs have been largely ghostwritten—though sometimes, as in the cases of Eisenhower and Lyndon B. Johnson, with the more or less active participation of the President himself. Richard M. Nixon did a good deal of his own writing, but was aided by a staff who did research for him and drafted whole sections of the manuscript, which Nixon then rewrote. This is a perfectly respectable approach to writing a memoir: Winston S. Churchill employed a similar staff of people, but the final product unquestionably sounds like Churchill, which is what really matters. Nixon's final drafts sounded a lot like Nixon (minus the profanity), whereas Johnson's prose had the unmistakable flatness of a ghosted product. That flatness is probably the reason that most such memoirs don't sell.

Book publishers usually lose money on Presidential memoirs, but the glamour of the White House and the prospect of being a President's publisher are apparently all it takes to make book publishers go weak at the knees, forget their own political loyalties, and reach for their checkbooks. The key is for the President to sell his memoirs while he is still in office, so that his prospective publishers get to meet him in the full majesty of the Oval Office or in his private quarters at the White House.

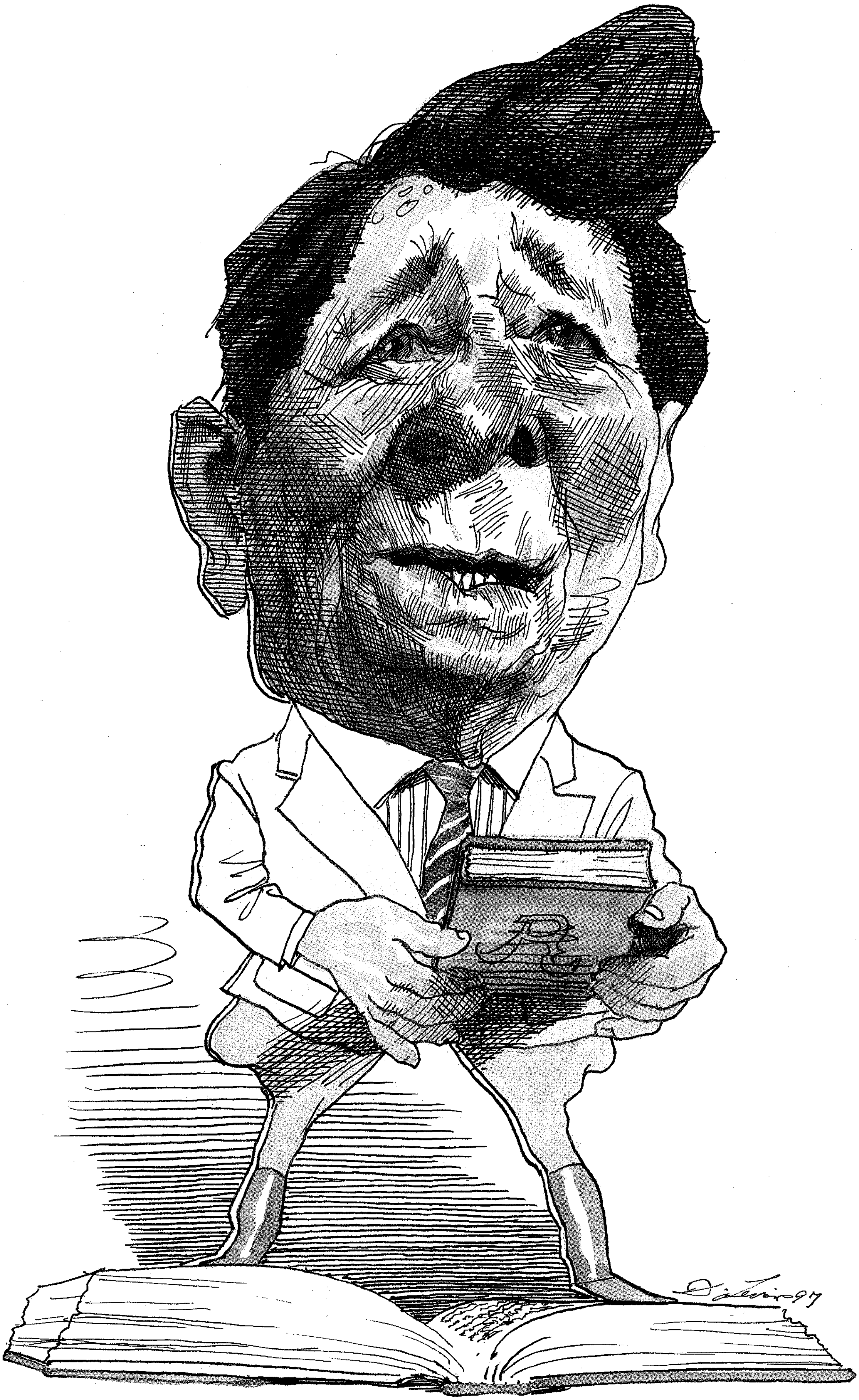
I should know. I went to the White House shortly after Jimmy Carter had moved in, and came back having bought a collection of his gubernatorial speeches entitled "A Government as Good as Its People"—possibly the most unsalable book imaginable. I bought it because I was overwhelmed partly by my first exposure to the White House and partly by an unseemly desire to be presented with a pair of Presidential cufflinks, which, needless to say, I never received from the author, who, unbeknownst to me, had just announced to his staff that he was cutting down on the disbursal of freebies—a custom that he thought had been abused by his predecessors.

With this in mind, I cannot say that I was surprised, after being summoned to the sumptuous office of my friend Richard E. Snyder, then the president of Simon & Schuster, for a hush-hush meeting in the late autumn of 1988, to learn that he had bought the Presidential memoirs of Ronald Reagan, and a separate collection of his speeches, for many millions of dollars. The Reagan book had, as they say, a "history." In June, 1977, Bill Adler, a book packager and agent who specialized in celebrity authors, and who was briefly testing the farther reaches of conflict of interest by working for S. & S. as an editor at the same time, had signed up Reagan to do a book on politics in Hollywood during the McCarthy era—on the witch-hunt and the blacklisting as seen by one who supported the witch-hunters, so to speak. Adler's enthusiasm was not contagious. Most of the S. & S. staff thought of Reagan as a West Coast right-wing extremist, and dreaded having to publish the book. This, as it turned out, need have concerned no one, since it was never written. The advance was modest, but since Snyder shrewdly refused to take back the money for many years, trusting in Reagan's star, Reagan owed the company a book, which he cheerfully acknowledged.

Thus Snyder had an option on the President's memoirs, and eventually made a deal that satisfied everybody. After Reagan left office, he was to receive what was certainly the largest advance ever paid to an author to date, and S. & S. was to get what Snyder later called, in a memo, "one of the most important books of the century."

Snyder was jubilant at this coup, which was to be kept secret until the President had left the White House, since he was unaware of the terms of the proposed deal. It had been negotiated with Reagan's new agent, Morton L. Janklow, and his blind trustee, and was subject to the President's approval after he left office. The President had been affable, charming, totally forthcoming, everything he was reputed to be, Snyder told me, and he confided one thing more: he had promised Reagan that I would be his editor. (I was the editor-in-chief of S. & S. then, as now, but, in any case, on a project this size the editor is something between a spokesperson and a *chef d'équipe*. I would work closely with the

DAVID LEVINE



Reagan was a born raconteur whose tales of person-to-person politics could bring tears to your eyes.

editor Alice Mayhew, whose knowledge of politics far exceeds mine, and my ever-patient associate, Chuck Adams.) I was pleased, and, while I was not a wholehearted supporter of the President, I was not associated with any obvious liberal causes that might offend him or Mrs. Reagan.

There was, however, a small fly in the ointment. I reminded Snyder that I was already the editor for Kitty Kelley (I had published her biography of Elizabeth Taylor), who was then working on what was supposed to be an unauthorized kiss-and-tell biography of Nancy Reagan. Mrs. Reagan was known to be furiously apprehensive about the book. How would the Reagans feel when they found out that I was her editor? I asked.

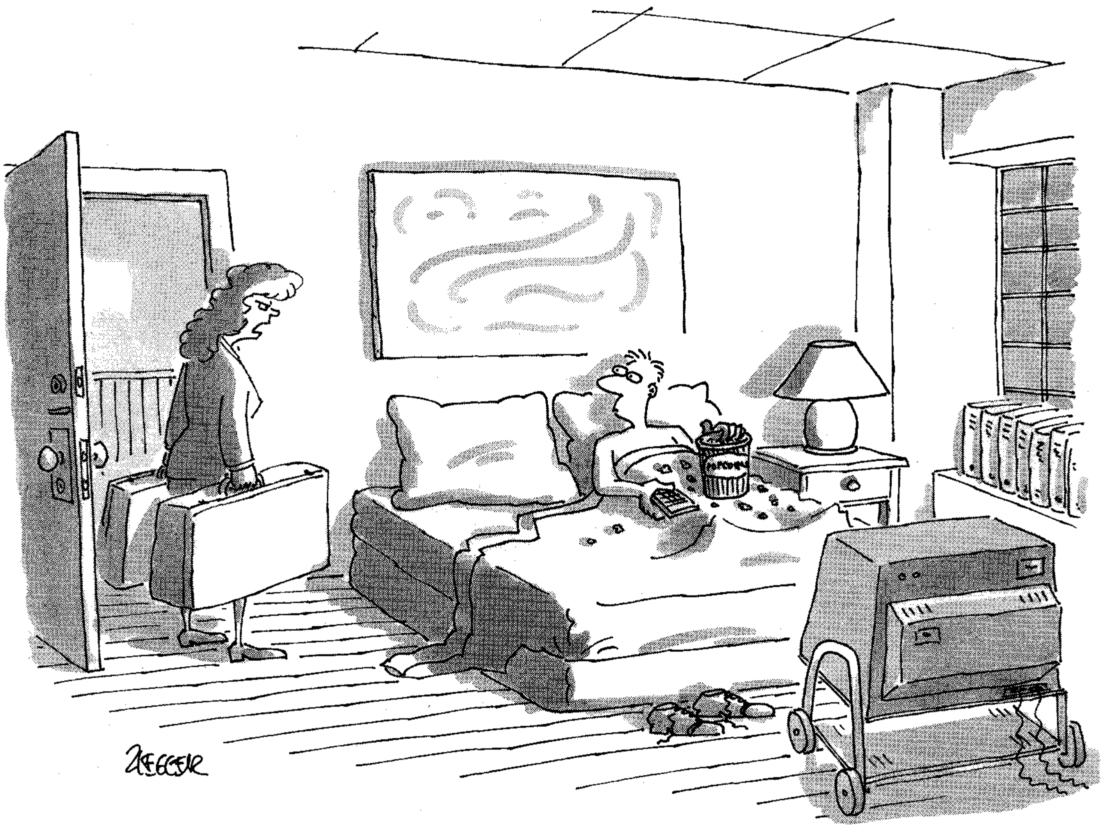
As it turned out, the person who objected most strongly to the arrangement was Kitty Kelley, not the President or Mrs. Reagan: both of them took the whole thing in stride once it hit the papers, as it was bound to do. The problem was finally solved by moving Kitty Kelley to Alice Mayhew's care. But I entered into the job of being Reagan's editor in a glum and slightly resentful frame of mind, since it had cost me a major author and, for a time, a good friend.

SUCH regrets as I had were soon assuaged by Ronald Reagan himself. He called me frequently at home to chat, and since he placed his own calls he often ended up talking to my wife, Margaret, with whom he shared an interest in horses and pigs. They exchanged photographs of each other on horseback, and Reagan sent her an autographed photograph of himself with a prize pig at the Iowa State Fair.

In the meantime, Alice Mayhew and I settled on one of her authors, Robert Lindsey, a former journalist of some distinction and the author of "The Falcon and the Snowman," to work with the President. Lindsey was a Californian, and he, too, succumbed quickly to the President's charm, although he noted with some concern that "Reagan is not a very introspective man and thus not an easy interview." Alice Mayhew and I drafted a proposed outline of the book, in which we recommended, rather hopefully, that it begin with a memorable opening line something like Nixon's ("I was born in a house my father built"), stress his humble origins, and achieve as much as possible the simplicity and dignity of Grant's prose. A tall order.

The publication of the President's collected speeches took place quickly, and caused a tremor of alarm. Beautifully packaged, they failed to sell, even in a de-luxe edition destined for major contributors to the President's election funds, and despite a lavish marketing campaign that involved Charlton Heston. Of course, it is a well-known fact that nobody wants to read speeches, but Reagan's popularity was so great that we had assumed *his* speeches would be an exception. We had also been assuming that his memoirs would sell like hotcakes, whatever was in them. But now the quality of the memoirs became an urgent concern, and Chuck Adams and I were sent out to California to review the text and urge the President to greater candor.

Lindsey's warning about his co-author's lack of introspection had proved to be an understatement. The President was genial, and prolific with the anecdotes that were his familiar repertoire; he appeared never to have met a person he didn't like. At one point, we had mapped out a beginning in which the President would relate his thoughts on leaving office—"perhaps what goes through his mind as he flies back across the country in Air Force One, after the Inauguration of his successor, passing over this vast country, thinking about where he has come from, his roots, what he has achieved in these past eight years, what is ahead for those who lie sleeping or working below." But no amount of prodding could get the President to reveal what his thoughts, if any, had been on that occasion. In the face of that reticence, Lindsey had done a remarkable job, but there were areas where



"The reason I'm singing the national anthem, Steve, is that I'm signing off now."

more was required—a situation symbolized by the fact that Reagan had refused even to mention his first wife, Jane Wyman, in the book. I feared that this hiatus might cause reviewers to question his willingness to face facts, particularly if they glanced at the index first, which is often exactly what they do.

"Not to blow my own horn, but the ad for my book in the 'Times' called it 'extraordinary.'"

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THE President's office was in Century City, a vast, neo-Egyptian real-estate development that I had visited before, to meet the billionaire oilman Marvin Davis. Irving Lazar had been trying to sell me his book, but it turned out that Davis had no intention of writing one and didn't have the slightest idea of who I was or why I had come to see him. His opulent office had made me think of Mussolini's famous map room, with its acres of polished marble flooring that you had to walk across to approach the Duce. Reagan's surroundings, by contrast, were restrained and modest—designed in the Colonial Williamsburg style, and staffed with clean-limbed, smiling young women and good-looking young men. They all had perfect teeth, and many of the men wore red-white-and-blue-patterned ties, while most of the women wore red-white-and-blue scarves. It wasn't exactly a uniform, but almost.

In the waiting room was a long glass cabinet containing all the saddles that Reagan had been presented with during the years of his Presidency, many of the Western ones gleaming with silver. (When actually on a horse, the President, now that he was no longer obliged to act in Westerns, favored English saddles, field boots, and old-fashioned flared whipcord riding breeches.) After a short wait, I was taken into a small, handsome room, lined with bookshelves and carpeted in blue, where, from behind a large desk, devoid of any sign of work, Reagan rose to greet me, his brow furrowed as if he had been deep in thought. He was dressed in a light summer suit, and smiled as naturally as if we had been friends all our lives. He had the kind of suntan and presence that only movie stars possess—a bigger-than-life quality that is purely physical, and that makes it hard to take your eyes off them even when they're not doing anything. His head was big, majestic, deeply seamed; his hands were gnarled, sinewy, and well cared for, but they were still a workingman's hands—they seemed Lincolnesque.

Reagan walked to the middle of the room, shook my hand heartily, and then pulled me carefully into the position he wanted. "Smile!" he said, and a flashbulb went off. One of the pretty girls with Betsy Ross scarves had just taken our picture with a Polaroid. The President had hit his mark like the pro he was, stopped dead on it, and placed me at just the right angle for a handshake photo. At the end of our talk, I was presented with the photo, in a special frame, and Reagan signed it for me. This, I realized, was not simply routine for visitors; it was, in many cases, the major reason for the visit. People came to have their pictures taken with Reagan the way they might with Old Faithful, or with Mickey Mouse at Disneyland. He didn't seem to mind; on the contrary, he did it with genuine good nature, as if he were content to be a kind of tourist attraction himself.

Once we sat down, the President seemed to lose interest in the proceedings. He had done his part: I would get a photograph of our shaking hands. Now it was time for me to do my part, which was to say thank you and go, leaving him to the glistening, bare leather surface of his desk. Since I had substantive questions to ask him, however, I stayed, and we chatted briefly, as a kind of warmup to the big meeting the next day, when we would all get together—the President, Bob Lindsey, Chuck and I, and the President's staff—to discuss the manuscript. I apologized for all the press about the Reagans and Kitty Kelley sharing the same editor, and in particular for an ill-advised interview I had given the Los Angeles *Times*, in which I had been quoted as saying, "Let's face it, Kitty Kelley's book is not likely to be too flattering, if the past is any guide." This comment had been re-printed all over the world, to the discomfort of Snyder and Janklow—so much so that I had promised not to give any more long interviews, despite the fact that I was on tour for my new novel "The Fortune," a copy of which I now presented to Reagan.

"Well," Reagan said pleasantly, his big, rough-hewn hands on my book, "it worried Nancy more than it worried me." These things happened, he said. He had worked for the big studios. You had commitments, and you had to fulfill them. You couldn't just renege on them. He understood that.

I told him that we had arranged for Kitty Kelley's book to be handled by another editor, so there would be no conflict of interest between the two projects, and he thanked me. He would tell Nancy, and he was sure it would be a load off her mind. For himself, he didn't seem to care one way or the other.

Encouraged, I took up the question of Jane Wyman, and her absence from the book. Reagan's benign expression didn't change, but his eyes became a little frosty. Bob Lindsey had already brought that subject up, he said, and he'd thought it was settled. There was no point in going into all that stuff at this late stage. Why, he himself hardly remembered a thing about his marriage to Jane. It was all water under the bridge.

But it *wasn't* quite all water under the bridge, I thought—he had a daughter from that marriage, so he could hardly have forgotten it completely. I pointed out that reviewers were likely to pick up on this. If he left out of his book something as simple and well known as his first marriage, they would conclude that he was leaving out things that were even more important.

"I never pay much attention to critics," Reagan said placidly. The world was divided into two kinds of people, he added: those who can, and those who criticize.

Ignoring the critics was a sensible attitude, I agreed. The problem was that what we had here was a big edifice, the integrity of which could be destroyed by a single unsteady brick. Give the reviewers an excuse to dismiss the book, and they would. Why risk it? I wasn't looking for a whole chapter about Jane Wyman, after all. A couple of lines would do.

The President looked gloomy. It occurred to me that it might not be Reagan himself who was being stubborn about this point but Mrs. Reagan. I made a mental note to call a trusted friend of Mrs. Reagan and ask for assistance.

With that, Reagan concluded business by standing up and taking me on a tour of his quarters to see all the photographs of his horses over the years. His affability returned as he described each one in detail. I had heard people criticizing his memory, but there seemed to be nothing wrong with it. He could even remember the names of Margaret's horses. It was, I decided, merely a question of whether he was interested in a subject or not. If he was, I was soon to discover, his memory was razor sharp.

In the morning, we met—Fred Ryan, the President's genial chief of staff, Bob Lindsey, Chuck Adams, a couple of other staffers, and I—in a larger room, around a big coffee table. Reagan arrived promptly, carrying a brown paper bag and dressed in a golf jacket, casual pants, and cowboy boots. He announced that he had a golf date for noon. This came as a surprise, since we had been anticipating an all-day session. Lindsey looked particularly shocked; he wanted to go through the manuscript, line by line. Reagan, however, was at his placid best. He would deal with the big problems, then go and play golf. We could settle the rest. He had thought things over during the night, he told us, and had concluded that it would be all right to mention his marriage to Jane Wyman. I guessed that my phone work had paid off. We quickly inserted four lines in the manuscript, and that was that. He appeared relieved, and almost breezy about the decision.

The idea of starting the book with the President's return home had seemed to him too negative. He had a different beginning in mind, and sketched it out for us. Why not begin with the most important moment of his Presidency? He had no doubt about what it was. It was on November 19, 1985, during his first meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev, near Geneva. Reagan had realized, he told us, that the summit meeting was going nowhere. The two leaders were surrounded by advisers and specialists as they discussed disarmament, and were unable to make any human contact, so Reagan had tapped Gorbachev on the shoulder and invited him to go for a walk. The two went outside, and Reagan took Gorbachev down toward the shore of Lake Geneva. "You and I," he told Gorbachev, "are old men—grandfathers." The peace of the world was on their shoulders. Why could they not simply sit down and talk things out, man to man, without advisers and "experts"? So they went into the boathouse overlooking the lake, just the two of them, and lighted a fire, and at the end of a long, heartfelt discussion Gorbachev agreed to mutual inspection and verification, which Reagan had established as the sine qua non of any deal. Gorbachev also agreed to take steps toward nuclear disarmament, and to two more summit meetings. It just went to show, the President said, his eyes moist, how important a person-to-person approach was.

Reagan told this story as if it were a scene from a movie, with vivid detail and real feeling—indeed, his sincerity was so obvious that all of us were touched. He was right: it was the perfect way to start the book. It was indeed a major breakthrough, for which the President deserved (and has since failed to get) full credit. There were only two problems, I whispered to one of his aides. The first was that I wasn't sure whether either Reagan or Gorbachev was a grandfather at the time. The second was that, since Reagan spoke no Russian and Gorbachev spoke no English, they could not have been alone, "man to man," for the discussion.

The aide nodded. "They *weren't* alone," he whispered back. "There were interpreters, security men—a whole bunch of people. That's just the way the President likes to remember it."

I nodded. This was a situation that had arisen before. Reagan's memory was selective. Rather like Woody Allen's Zelig, he had a tendency to place himself in the foreground of events, and to confuse fiction and reality. He had told a group of Medal of Honor winners an anecdote about an 8th Air Force bomber pilot who, when his B-17 was mortally hit by flak, ordered the crew to parachute. Just as the pilot was about to jump from the flaming aircraft, he discovered that the ball gunner was trapped in his turret, wounded, and terrified of dying alone. The pilot took off his parachute, went back to the ball-turret position behind the wings, and lay down on the floor so that he could put his arm into the turret and hold the dying boy's hand. "Don't sweat it, son. We'll go down together," he told the gunner as the plane plunged to the ground.

This brought tears not only to Reagan's eyes; it brought tears to the eyes of the Medal of Honor winners. The only problem, as the press soon discovered, was that it had never happened. It was a scene from a movie, which the President had unwittingly transposed to real life.

That was the difficulty. He had the ability, rare even among actors, to convince a listener that something had happened the way he told it when it hadn't, and this was because he believed it with complete sincerity himself. Thus we had to convince Reagan not to include the story about how he had been with the United States Signal Corps at the German death camps and recorded the atrocities there (a story that he had told Yitzhak Shamir, bringing tears to Shamir's eyes), because it turned out that Reagan had spent the entire war in Hollywood, recruiting personnel for Army film units. He had seen some of the first footage taken by Army cinematographers of the liberated camps and had somehow convinced himself that he'd been there. There was no intent to deceive on his part—he was simply one of those born raconteurs who tell the same stories over and over again until they *become* truth.

We moved on to other subjects. Reagan had been clinging to the idea of calling the book "Trusting the People," which didn't even sound like an autobiography, but we persuaded him to accept "An American Life," which he liked. On two other subjects, however, he was intractable. He would not add a word to his hermetic account of the Iran-Contra affair (in fact, it was the only subject on which I received a brief, stiff note from Fred Ryan, stating that, while the President shared my goal of making the book "an open, frank account," he had made his decision on this matter and we were to "promptly move ahead in accordance with his instructions"); nor did he wish to explain in any detail how the savings-and-loan crisis had begun.

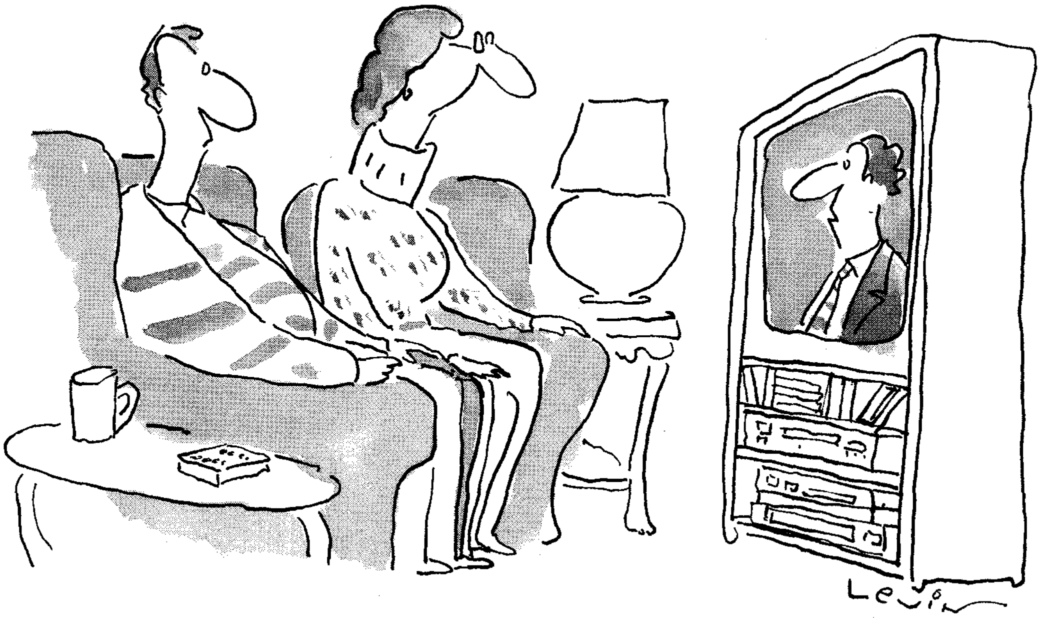
I pointed out to him that most people regarded the savings-and-loan crisis as having occurred on his watch, rightly or wrongly, and that he should therefore address it somehow in the text. He shook his head patiently. A lot of people supposed that, he said, but it wasn't true. The problems with the savings-and-loan organizations had begun in California and Texas, had they not? I agreed. Well, the President went on, that was just the point. In both those states, state law precluded federal intervention; there was nothing the federal government could have done. It simply wasn't his responsibility.

I got up to stretch my legs, and was followed by the aide who had been sitting next to me. Surely federal law superseded state banking laws? I asked him. He nodded. But in that case the President was wrong, wasn't he? The aide shrugged. "Well, yes, technically," he allowed. "But he's always believed that, you see."

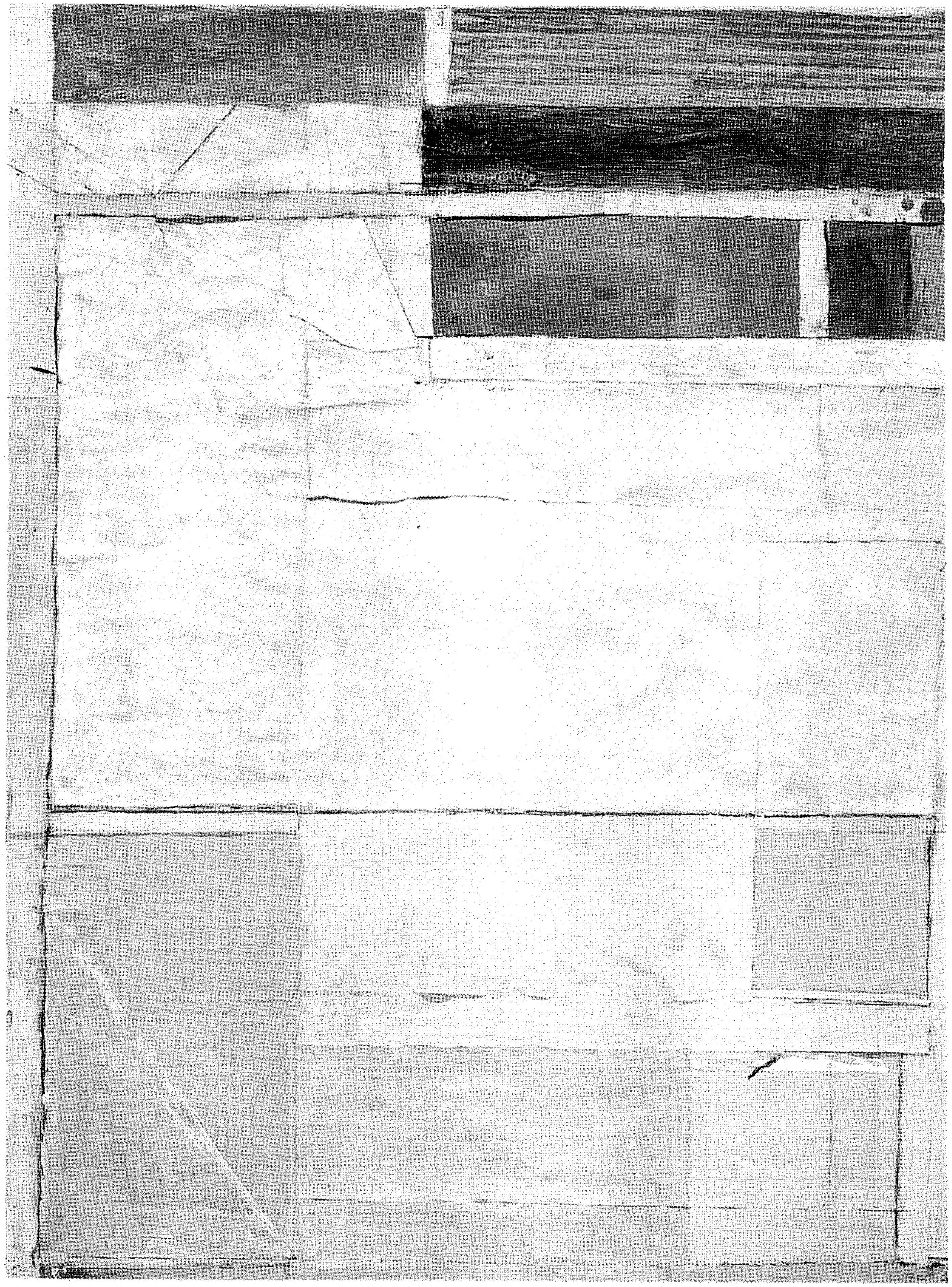
I saw, all right. Reagan was so persuasive, so gentle, so convincing a father figure that nobody wanted to argue or disagree with him. Even when he was wrong, it was no doubt easier to go around him than to face the fact head on.

We returned to the table just as coffee was served. Reagan gave the paper bag he'd been carrying to an assistant, who came back a few minutes later with a china plate of homemade cookies. The President held it up so that we could admire them. For a moment, I thought he was going to say that he had baked them himself, but, no, they were chocolate-chip cookies that had been baked for him by the Reagans' maid. He described with pride how she had risen at dawn to make them, and had given them to him as he was getting into the car, to bring to the office.

The cookies were lumpy, with a crisply burned crust, and rather thick. Still, Reagan was beaming at them as if they were culinary works of art, and it was impossible not to be touched by his gratitude that somebody who worked for him would go to this much trouble on his behalf. He took one, passed the plate to the person on his right, and it went on around the table. Chuck Adams, I no-



"Viewers should be advised: the following debate on public funding for the arts contains violence and adult language."



ticed, put his in his pocket. I tasted mine, found it too sweet, and put the remainder in my pocket, where I was to find it later in the day. Lindsey, on my left, took one of the cookies and put the plate back in front of the President, who repeated, with exactly the same degree of emotion, that they had been baked for him by the maid.

Some minutes elapsed while we sipped our coffee and discussed various points—my notes include questions like "*Why* did RR pick Haig (or the rest of his Cabinet)?"; "What did RR think of Begin personally?"; and a mysterious one that reads simply, "Cut the nutmeg story?"—but it was becoming clear to me that we no longer had Reagan's full attention. At first, I thought he was probably thinking about his golf date; as an outdoorsman, he cannot have relished spending the morning indoors with a writer and two editors. Then I saw that his gaze was fixed on the plate, with one cookie left. His expression was determined but mildly guilty, as if he had been caught in the act of some misdeed. Despite his age, he looked like a child yearning for what he couldn't have. He was probably recalling one of the lessons of his childhood: you do not take the last cookie on the plate, you offer it around.

I had no doubt that in the poor but honest household in Galesburg (and, later, Dixon), Illinois, where the Reagan family often made do with "oatmeal meat" (a mixture of oatmeal and hamburger, served with gravy), this lesson had been drummed into him harder than most. Reagan's father was a shoe salesman who went on binges whenever things were going well for him, and, while Reagan's descriptions of his childhood tended to be affectionate, one got an underlying sense of how important it was to his mother to keep up appearances, and how seriously both parents took the teaching of the good manners that kept them, just barely, in the middle class. There were many things that Reagan had done since his days in Illinois which might have discomforted his mother—getting divorced, for one—but he had remained, as she had surely wished, an essentially decent and truthful man, who saw people as individuals and treated everyone with courtesy. Given who he was, taking the last cookie on the plate was out of the question.

CALIFORNIA MODERN

The titles of Richard Diebenkorn's paintings are as direct as the light inside them: "Yellow Porch," "Albuquerque No. 5," "Girl Smoking." Even the untitled abstract works of the San Francisco artist (like the one at the left, from 1992) so thoroughly reflect his unironic concerns (space, mood, light) that "Untitled" seems appropriate, as if he were calling a painting "Painting." Starting October 9th, the Whitney Museum presents the most extensive exhibition ever assembled of Diebenkorn's paintings, with more than a hundred and fifty works, from every period of a career marked by sudden turns and reinvention: landscapes, nudes, color studies, and, of course, the epochal "Ocean Park" series. In a note to himself about his painting he wrote, "I seem to have to do it elaborately wrong and with many conceits first. Then maybe I can attack and deflate my pomposity and arrive at something straight and simple."

COURTESY THE HIRSHHORN MUSEUM, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

It became evident that nothing could be accomplished until Reagan's mind returned to the matters at hand. I coughed, and said how much I had enjoyed my cookie. Reagan nodded vigorously and picked up on my cue. They *were* good, weren't they? he agreed, lifting the plate and asking if anybody would like the last cookie. One of his aides took the plate and passed it on. The aides, I noticed, knew better than to reach for the cookie. Adams passed the plate on to me, and I passed it on to Lindsey, the last man in the circle. I caught a glimpse of the President's face. His eyes were bright, his expression that of somebody who has done the right thing and is about to see it pay off. He was already reaching for the plate when Lindsey, who was bent over a copy of the manuscript, oblivious of the small drama taking place at the table, absent-mindedly grabbed the cookie and bit into it without even looking up.

Reagan's face crumpled; he looked like a man who has just staked the farm on one card and lost. I have seldom felt so badly for anyone. Then his stoicism returned. He took the empty plate from Lindsey, set it back on the table, and directed his gaze to the far horizon, leaving us to get on with the details.

It was hardly surprising that the question of who had actually written the book came up in the press from time to time. Everybody knew that Reagan hadn't written it by himself, but Lindsey's name did not appear on the jacket or the title page. I came up with a quick answer to such questions which seemed to satisfy everybody: "Of course the President wrote the book—it's his book—but with the editorial assistance of Robert Lindsey."

The matter did not erupt again until Reagan came to S. & S. for a press conference in October of 1990, shortly after the book was published. The President was introduced to the people at S. & S. who had worked on the book, and he and I posed for photographers, each holding a copy of the manuscript and pretending to edit it. Then Reagan stood up, walked to the door, and waved jauntily to the photographers. Pausing at the threshold, he called out to them cheerfully, "I hear it's a terrific book! One of these days I'm going to read it myself," and was gone.

I have always remembered him that way: cheerful, upbeat, gentlemanly, good-natured. Even when the book didn't sell as we had hoped—by the time it came out, it had become fashionable to put Reagan down, even among those who had been his supporters—I looked upon it as one of my happier publishing experiences. I thought the book deserved better than it got at the hands of the critics, and so did he.

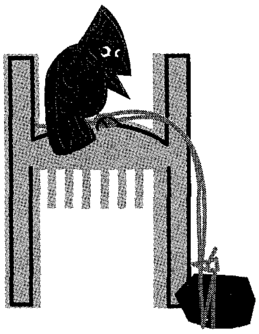
Who else would have told the story of the dead goldfish at the summit? It appears that during the first summit meeting, when the President was staying in the home of the Aga Khan, he was informed that one of the goldfish in his host's aquarium had died. Feeling responsible, Reagan sent the Secret Service out to search Geneva for a replacement, and put the dead goldfish in his pocket in a matchbox, which he then forgot to discard, so that during his initial meetings with Gorbachev—meetings on which hung the fate of the world—he was carrying a dead goldfish in his pocket. What other President would have had that sense of old-fashioned good manners toward his host? And, in an age of faked emotions in politics, how nice to look back on somebody who, whatever his faults, genuinely believed in what he was saying. Even when it was wrong. ♦

FICTION

EVERY NIGHT FOR A THOUSAND YEARS

A story of the Civil War.

BY CHRIS ADRIAN



HE dreamed his brother's death at Fredericksburg. General Burnside appeared as an angel at the foot of his bed to announce the tragedy: "The Army regrets to inform you that your brother George Washington Whitman was shot in the head by a lewd fellow from Charleston." The General alit on the bedpost and drew his dark wings close about him, as if to console himself. Moonlight limned his strange whiskers and his hair. His voice shook as he went on. "Such a beautiful boy. I held him in my arms while his life bled out. See? His blood made this spot." He pointed at his breast, where a dark stain in the shape of a bird lay on the blue wool. "I am so very sorry," he said, choking and weeping. Tears fell in streams from his eyes, ran over the bed and out the window, where they joined the Rappahannock, which had somehow come north to flow through Brooklyn, bearing the bodies of all the battle's dead.

In the morning he read the wounded list in the *Herald.* There it was: "First Lieutenant G. W. Whitmore." He knew from George's letters that there was nobody named Whitmore in the company. He went to his mother's house. "I'll go find him," he told her and his sister and his brothers.

So he went. Washington, he quickly discovered, was a city of hospitals. He looked in half of them before a cadaverous-looking clerk told him he'd be better off looking at Falmouth, where most of the Fredericksburg wounded still lay in field hospitals. In Falmouth he wandered outside the hospital tents, afraid to go in and find his mangled brother. He stood before a pile of amputated limbs, arms and legs of varying lengths, all black and blue and rotten in the chill. A thin layer of snow covered some of them. He circled the heap, thinking he must recognize his brother's hand if he saw it. He closed his eyes and considered the amputation: his brother screaming when he woke from the chloroform, his brother's future contracting to something bitter and small.

But George had only got a hole in his cheek. A piece of shell pierced his wispy beard and scraped a tooth. He spit blood and hot metal into his hand, put the shrapnel in his pocket, and later showed it to his worried brother, who burst into tears and clutched him in a bear hug when they were reunited in Captain Francis's tent, where George sat with his feet propped on a trunk and a cigar stuck in his bandaged face.

"You shouldn't fret," said George. But he could not help fretting, even now that he knew his brother was alive and well. A great fretting buzz had started up in his head, inspired by the pile of limbs and the smell of blood in the air and ruined Fredericksburg across the river, all broken chimneys and crumbling walls. He stayed in George's tent and, watching him sleep, felt a deep satisfaction. He wandered around the camp, sat by fires with sentries who told him hideous stories about the death of friends.

Ten days later he still couldn't leave Falmouth. Even after his brother moved out with the healthy troops on Christmas Day, he stayed and made himself useful, changing dressings, fetching for the nurses, and just sitting with the wounded boys, with the same satisfaction on him as when he watched George sleep. In Brooklyn a deep and sinister melancholy had settled over him. For the past six months he had wandered the streets, feeling as if all his vital capacities were sputtering, about to die. In the hospital that melancholy was gone, scared off, perhaps, by all the misery, and replaced by something infinitely more serious and real.

He finally went back to Washington in charge of a transport. With every jolt and shake of the train a chorus of horrible groans wafted through the cars. He thought it would drive him insane. What saved him was the singing of a boy with a leg wound. The whole trip he sang in a rough voice indicative of tone-deafness. His name was Henry Smith. He'd come all the way from divided Missouri, and said he had a gaggle of cousins fighting under General Beauregard. He sang "Oh! Susanna" over and over again, and no one told him to be quiet.

All the worst cases went to Union Square Hospital, because it was closest to the train station. He went with them, and kept up the service he'd begun at Falmouth—visiting, talking, reading, fetching and helping. Months passed.

He went to other hospitals. There were certainly enough of them to keep him busy—Finley, Campbell, Carver, Harewood, Mount Pleasant, Judiciary Square. And then there were the churches and public buildings, also stuffed with wounded. Even the Patent Office held them: boys on cots set up on the marble floor of the model room. He brought horehound candy to an eighteen-year-old from Iowa, who lay with a missing arm and a sore throat in front of a glass case that held Ben Franklin's printing press. Two boys from Brooklyn had beds in front of General Washington's camp equipment. He read to them from a copy of the *Eagle* his mother sent down, every now and then looking up at the General's tents rolled neatly around their posts, his folded chairs and mess kit, sword and cane, washstand, his surveyor's compass, and, a few feet down, in a special case all to itself, the Declaration of Independence. Other boys lay in front of pieces of the Atlantic Cable, ingenious toys, rattraps, the razor of Captain Cook.

He could not visit every place all in a day, though he tried at first. Eventually he picked a few and stuck with those. But mostly he was at Union Square, where Hank Smith was.

"I HAD my daddy's pistol with me," said Hank Smith. "That's why I got my leg still." It wasn't the first time he'd been told how Hank had saved his own leg from the "chopping butchers" in the

LAURIE ROSENWALD

field hospital. But he didn't mind hearing the story again. It was spring. The leg was still bad, though not as bad as it had been. At least that was the impression that Hank gave. He never complained about his leg. He'd come down with typhoid, too, a gift from the hospital. "I want my pistol back."

"I'll see what I can do." Walt always said that, but they both knew no one was going to give Hank back the pistol with which he threatened to blow out the brains of the surgeon who had tried to take his leg. They had left him alone then, and later another doctor said there wasn't any need to amputate. They would watch the wound. "Meanwhile, have an orange." Walt pulled the fruit out of his coat pocket and peeled it. Soldiers' heads began to turn in their beds as the smell washed over the ward. Some asked if he had any for them.

"Course he does," said Hank. In fact, he had a coatful of them. He had bought them at Center Market, then walked through the misty, wet morning, over the brackish canal and across the filthy Mall. The lowing of cattle drifted toward him from the unfinished monument as he walked along, wanting an orange but afraid to eat one lest he be short when he got to the hospital. He had money for oranges, sweets, books, tobacco from sponsors in Brooklyn and New York and elsewhere. And he had a little money for himself from a job, three hours a day as a copyist in the Paymaster's office. From his desk he had a spectacular view of Georgetown and the river, and the three stones that were said to mark the watery graves of three Indian sisters. They had cursed the spot: anyone who tried to cross there must drown. He would sit and stare at the rocks, imagining himself shedding his shirt and shoes by the riverside, trying to swim across. He imagined drowning, the great weight of water pressing down on him. Inevitably his reverie was broken by the clump-clump of one-legged soldiers on their crutches, coming up the stairs to the office, located perversely on the top floor of the building.

UNION SQUARE was under the command of a brilliant drunk named Canning Woodhull. Over whiskey he explained his radical policies, which included washing hands and instruments, throwing out sponges, swabbing everything in sight with bitter-smelling Labarraque's solution, and an absolute lack of faith in laudable pus.

"Nothing laudable about it," he said. "White or green, pus is pus, and either way it's bad for the boys. There are creatures in the wounds—elements of evil. They are the emissaries of Hell, sent earthward to increase our suffering, to increase death and increase grief. You can't see them except by their actions." They knocked glasses and drank, and Walt made a face because the whiskey was medicinal, laced with quinine. It did not seem to bother Woodhull.

"I have the information from my wife, who has great and secret knowledge," Woodhull said. "She talks to spirits. Most of what she hears is garbage, of course. But this is true." Maybe it was. His hospital got the worst cases and kept them alive better than any other hospital in the city, even ones that got casualties only half as severe. Woodhull stayed in charge despite a reputation as a wastrel and a drunk and an off-and-on lunatic. Once, he was removed by a coalition of his colleagues, only to be reinstated by Dr. Letterman, the medical director of the Army of the Potomac, who had been personally impressed by many visits to Union Square. "General Grant is a drunk, too," he would say in response to a charge against Dr. Woodhull.

"They are vulnerable to prayer and bromine, and whiskey and Labarraque's. Lucky for us." He downed another glass. "You know, some of the nurses are complaining. Just last Tuesday I was in Ward E with the redoubtable Mrs. Hawley. We saw you come in at the end of the aisle and she said, 'Here comes that odious Walt Whitman to talk evil and unbelief to my boys. I think I would rather see the Evil One himself—at least if he had horns and hoofs—in my ward. I shall get him out as soon as possible!' And she rushed off to do just that. She failed, of course." He poured again.

"Shall I stop coming, then?"

"Heavens, no. As long as old Horse-Face Hawley is complaining, I'll know you're doing good. God keep some dried-up old shrew from driving you away."

Two surgeons came into Woodhull's makeshift office, a corner of Ward F sectioned off by three regimental flags.

"*Assistant* Surgeon Walker is determined to kill Captain Carter," said Dr. Bliss, a dour black-eyed man from Baltimore. "She has given him opium for his diarrhea and, very foolishly, in my opinion, withheld ipecac and calomel." Dr. Mary Walker stood next to him, looking calm, her arms folded across her chest. She held the same rank as George did. Their uniforms had the same gold stripes, the same gold braid on the hat.

"Dr. Walker is doing as I have asked her," said Woodhull. "Ipecac and calomel are to be withheld in all cases of flux and diarrhea."

"For God's sake, why?" asked Dr. Bliss, his face reddening. He was new in Union Square. Earlier the same day, Woodhull had castigated him for not cleaning a suppurating chest wound.

"Because it is for the best," said Woodhull. "Because if you do it that way, a boy will not die. Because if you do it that way, some mother's heart will not be broken."

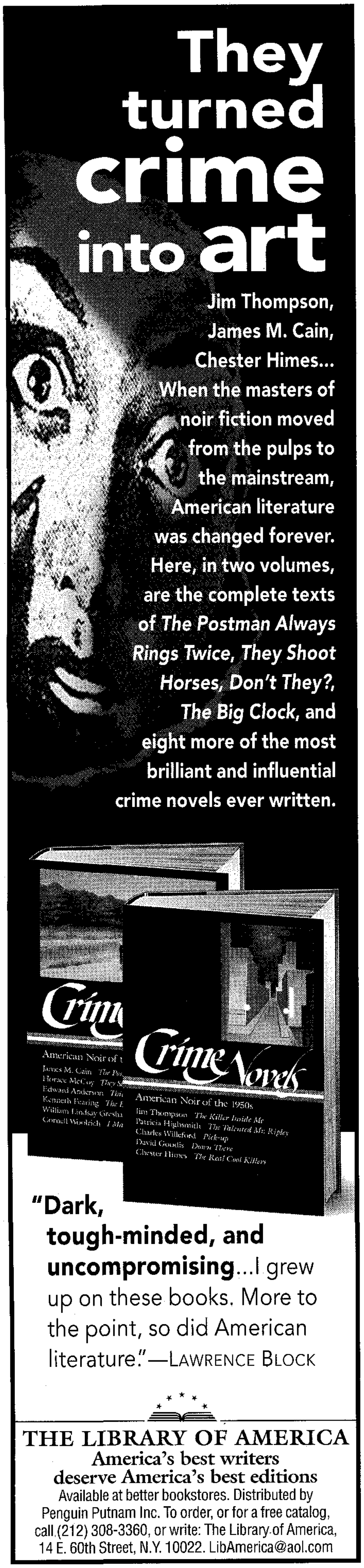
Dr. Bliss turned redder, then paled, as if his rage had broken and ebbed. He scowled at Dr. Walker, turned sharply on his heel, and left. Dr. Walker sat down.

"Buffoon," she said. Woodhull poured whiskey for her. It was an open secret in the hospital that they were lovers.

"Dr. Walker," said Woodhull, "why don't you tell Mr. Whitman about your recent arrest?" She sipped her whiskey and told how she'd been arrested outside her boarding house for masquerading as a man. Walt only half listened to her talk. He was thinking about diarrhea. It was just about the worst thing, he had decided. He'd seen it kill more boys than all the miniés and shrapnel, and typhoid and pneumonia—than all the other afflictions combined. He'd written to his mother, "I think we ought to stop this war, however we can. Just stop it. War is nine hundred and ninety-nine parts diarrhea to one part glory. Those who like wars ought to be made to fight in them."

"I did my best to resist them," said Dr. Walker. "I shouted out, 'Congress has bestowed on me the right to wear trousers!' It was to no avail." She was silent for a moment, and then all three of them burst out laughing.

IN the summer he saw the President almost every day, because he lived on the route the President took to and from his summer residence north of the city. Walking down the street, soon after leaving his rooms in the morning, he'd hear the approach of the party. Always he stopped and waited for them to pass. Mr. Lincoln, dressed in plain black, rode a gray horse, surrounded by twenty-five or thirty cavalry with their sabres drawn and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held up over their shoulders. They got so they would exchange bows, he and the President, he tipping his broad, floppy felt hat, Lincoln tipping his high stiff black one and bending a little in the saddle. And every time they did this the same thought bloomed large in Walt's mind: A sad man.

With the coming of the hot weather Dr. Woodhull redoubled his efforts to eradicate the noxious effluvia. They threw open the windows and burned eucalyptus leaves in small bronze censers set in the four corners of each ward. The eucalyptus, combined with the omnipresent reek of Labarraque's solution, gave some of the boys aching heads. Dr. Woodhull prescribed whiskey.

"I want a bird," Hank Smith said one day late in July. The weather was hot and dry. Hank had been fighting a bad fever for a week. Walt helped him change out of his soaked shirt, then wiped him down with a cool wet towel. The wet shirt he took to the window, where he wrung out the sweat, watching it fall and dapple the dirt. He lay the shirt to dry on the sill, and considered his wet, salty hands. In the distance he could see the Capitol, gleaming magnificently in the late-afternoon sun.

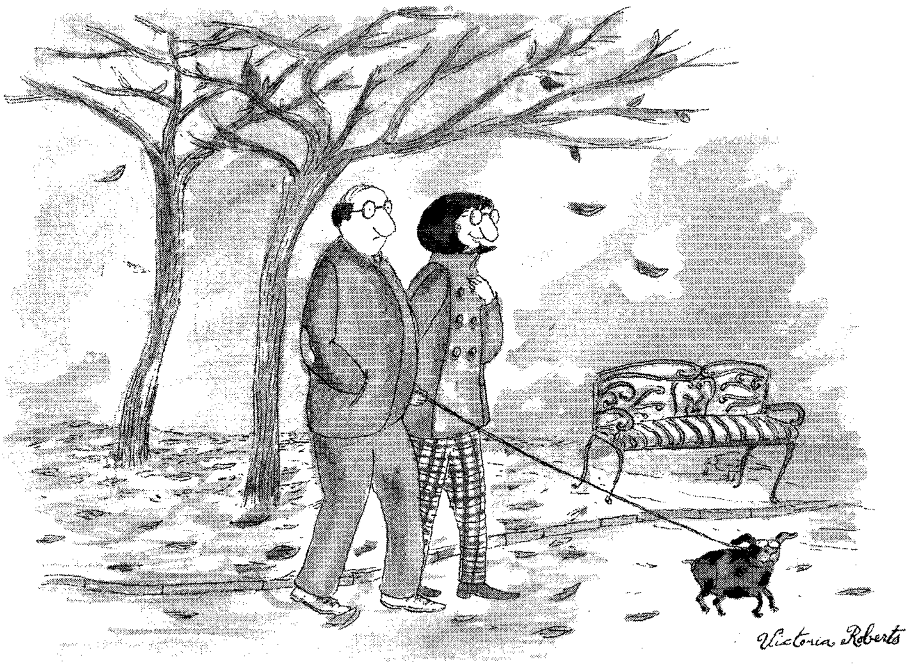
"I want a bird," Hank said again. "When I was small, my sister got me a bird. I named it for her—Olivia. Would you help me get one?" Walt left the window and sat on a stool by the bed. The sun lit up the hair on Hank's chest, and made Walt think of shining fields of wheat.

"I could get you a bird," he said. "I don't know where, but I will get you a bird."

"I know where," said Hank, as Walt helped him into a new shirt. With a jerk of his head he indicated the window. "There's plenty of birds out in the yard. You just get a rock and some string. Then we'll get a bird."

He came back the next day with rock and string, and they set a trap of bread crumbs on the windowsill. Walt crouched beneath the window and grabbed at whatever came for the crumbs. He missed two jays and a blackbird, but caught a beautiful cardinal by its leg. It chirped frantically and pecked at his hand; the fluttering of its wings against his wrists made him think of the odd buzz that still thrilled his soul when he was in the wards. He brought the bird to Hank, who tied the string to its leg, and the rock to the string, then set the rock down by his bed. The cardinal tried to fly for the window, but only stuck in midair, its desperate wings striking up a small breeze that Walt, kneeling near it, could feel against his face. Hank clapped and laughed.

They called the bird Olivia. She became the ward's pet. Other boys would insist on having her near their beds. It did not take her long to become domesticated. Soon she was eating from Hank's hand and sleeping at night beneath his



"Philip Larkin wouldn't like you, either."

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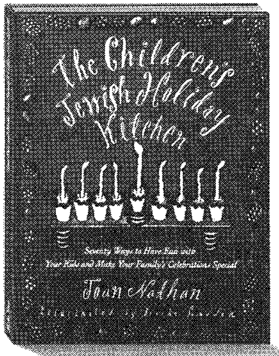

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cot. They kept her secret from the nurses and doctors, until one morning Hank was careless. He fell asleep having left her out in the middle of the aisle while Woodhull was making his rounds. Walt had just walked into the ward, his arms full of candy and fruit and novels.

"Who let this dirty bird into my hospital?" Woodhull asked. He very swiftly bent down and picked up the stone, then tossed it out the window. Olivia trailed helplessly behind it. Walt dropped his packages and rushed outside, where he found the bird in the dirt, struggling with a broken wing. He put her in his shirt and took her back to his room, where she died three days later, murdered by his landlady's cat. He told Hank she flew away. "A person can't have anything," Hank said, and stayed angry about it for a week.

At Christmas, Mrs. Hawley and her cronies trimmed the wards; evergreen wreaths were hung on every pillar and garlands strung across the hall. At the foot of every bed hung a tiny stocking, hand-knitted by Washington society ladies. Walt went around stuffing them with walnuts and lemons and licorice. Hank's leg got better and worse, better and worse. Walt cornered Dr. Woodhull and said he had a bad feeling about Hank's health. Woodhull insisted he was going to be fine; Walt's fretting was pointless.

Hank's fevers waxed and waned, too. Once Walt came in from a blustery snowstorm, his beard full of snow. Hank insisted on pressing his face into it, saying it made him feel so much better than any medicine had, except maybe paregoric, which he found delicious, and said made him feel like he was flying in his bed.

Walt read to him from the New Testament, the bit about there being no room at the inn.

"Are you a religious man?" Hank asked him.

"Probably not, my dear, in the way that you mean." Though he did make a point of dropping by the Union Square chapel whenever he was there. It was a little building, with a quaint onion-shaped steeple. He would sit in the back and listen to the services for boys whom he'd been visiting almost every day. He wrote their names down in a small leatherbound notebook that he kept in one of his pockets. By Christmas he had pages and pages of them. Sometimes at

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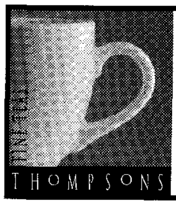

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night he would sit in his room and read the names softly aloud by the light of a single candle.

Dr. Walker came by and asked to borrow his Bible. She said she had news from the War Department.

"What's the news?" he asked her.

"Nothing good," she said. "It is dark, dark everywhere." She wanted to read some Job, to cheer herself.

SOMETIMES when he could not sleep, which was often, he would walk around the city, past the serene mansions on Lafayette Square, past the President's house, where he would pause and wonder if a light in the window meant Mr. Lincoln was awake and agonizing. Once he saw a figure in a long, trailing black crêpe veil move, lamp in hand, past a series of windows, and he imagined it must be Mrs. Lincoln, searching forlornly for her little boy, who had died two winters ago. He walked past the empty market stalls, along the ever stinking canal. He would pause by it, looking down into the dirty water, and see all manner of things float by. Boots and bonnets, half-eaten vegetables, animals. Once there was a dead cat drifting on a little floe of ice.

Walking on, he would pass into Murder Bay, where the whores hooted at him, but he was otherwise left alone. From a distance he was large and imposing, not an easy target, and up close he looked so innocent and sweet that even the most heartless criminal would not raise a hand against him. He would peek into alleys that housed whole families of "contraband." Sometimes a dirty child would rush out of a dank shanty and ask him a riddle. He got to keeping candy in his pockets for the children. He would cut back along the canal, then across, sometimes watching the moon shine on the towers of the Smithsonian castle, and on the white roofs of Union Square. He would walk among the shrubs and trees of the Mall, sometimes getting lost on a footpath that went nowhere, but eventually he would cross the canal again and walk up to the Capitol. The great statue of General Washington was there, the one that everyone ridiculed because he was dressed in a toga. It was said that his sword was raised in a threat to do harm to the country if his clothes were not returned.

He liked the statue. He would crawl up into its lap and sprawl out, Pietà-like, or else put his arms around the thick marble neck and have a good wrenching cry. At dawn he would stand outside the Capitol, writing his name in the snow with his foot, and he could smell the bread baking in the basement. He had a friend in the bakery, who loaded him down with countless hot loaves. He'd walk back to Union Square, warmed by the bread in his coat, and sometimes he'd have enough so that every full-diet boy in a ward would wake with a still-warm loaf on his chest.

"THEY want to take my leg," Hank told him. It was early May, and still cold. "I ain't going to let them. You've got to get me a gun."

"Hush," said Walt. "They won't take your leg." Though in fact it looked as if they would have to. Just when he had seemed on the verge of good health, just when he had beaten off the typhoid, the leg flared up again and deteriorated rapidly. Dr. Woodhull cleaned the wound, prayed over it, swabbed it with whiskey, all to no avail. A hideous, stinking infection had taken root and was growing.

He went looking for Dr. Woodhull, to discuss Hank's case. He did not find him in his office. There was a pall of silence and gloom over all the wards. News of the horrible casualties accrued by General Grant in his Wilderness campaign had reached the hospital. Dr. Bliss and Mrs. Hawley were having a loud discussion as she changed dressings. "Trust a drunk not to give a fig for our boys' lives," said Dr. Bliss. "This war is an enterprise dominated by inebriates, charlatans, and fools." He gave Walt a mean look. Walt asked if either of them had seen Woodhull. Neither of them replied, but the young man whose dressings were being changed told him he had gone out to the deadhouse.

Walt found him there, among the bodies. There were only a few, just the dead from the past few days. He was weeping over a shrouded form. Dr. Walker stood beside him, her hand on his shoulder.

"Canning," she said. "You've got to come back now. We've got boys coming from Spotsylvania."

"Oh, darling," said Woodhull. "I just can't stand it." He was leaning over the shrouded body, dropping tears onto the face. As the fabric became wet Walt

THE HAWK, THE SERPENTS, AND THE CLOUD

In writing, he moved from the word *I*,
the word once a serpent curled between the rocks,
to *he*, the word once a hawk drifting above the reeds,
back to *we:* a nest of serpents.
Of course the hawk attacked the serpents.
She became a cloud, nursed us, mothered us,
scrubbed us with rain. *I*, once a serpent, know the Chinese
character for *he* is a standing figure,
the sign for *she* is a kneeling figure,
the word *cloud* is formed by two horizontal waves above a plain,
and that in writing Chinese
you must show feeling for different parts of the word.
Writing contains painting and painting writing.
Each is bird and sky to the other, soil and flower.

—Stanley Moss

could make out the boy’s features. He had a thin mustache, and a mole on his cheek. “There’s such an awful lot of blood. You’d think they could do something with all that blood. A great work. Oughtn’t something great to be coming?”

Dr. Walker noticed him standing by the door. “Mr. Whitman,” she said. “If you would assist me?” He put his arm around Dr. Woodhull and bore him up, away from the body and out of the deadhouse. They put him on an empty cot, in a half-empty ward.

“Oh, darling,” said Woodhull. “I don’t even want to think about it.” He turned over on his side and began to breathe deeply and evenly. The odor of urine began to rise from him.

Dr. Walker took a watch from her pocket and looked at it. “We got a wire,” she said. “They’re moving a thousand boys from the field hospitals.” Then she leaned down close to Woodhull’s snoring face and said, “You had better be well and awake in five hours, sir.”

“I will do whatever I can,” said Whitman.

“I am glad to hear it.” She adjusted her hat on her head and uttered an explosive sigh. “General Stuart has died,” she said. “Did you know that? Shot by a lowly infantryman. I had a dream once that he came for me on his horse, with garish feathers in his hat. ‘Come along with me, Mary,’ he said. ‘We’ll ride away from it all.’ ‘Not by your red beard, General Satan,’ said I. ‘Get thee behind me.’ Do you suppose I did the right thing? Would you have gone with him?”

Walt thought about it: He pictured himself riding west with General Stuart to a place where the war could not touch them. He imagined the tickly feeling General Stuart’s feathers would make in his nose as they rode to the extreme end of the continent. And he thought of the two of them riding shirtless through sunny California and of reaching out their hands to pick fat grapes.

“I’VE got to get out,” said Hank. A week had passed, and Union Square was stuffed to the gills with new patients. Hank’s leg was scheduled to come off in two days. In the deadhouse there was a pile of limbs as high as Walt’s head.

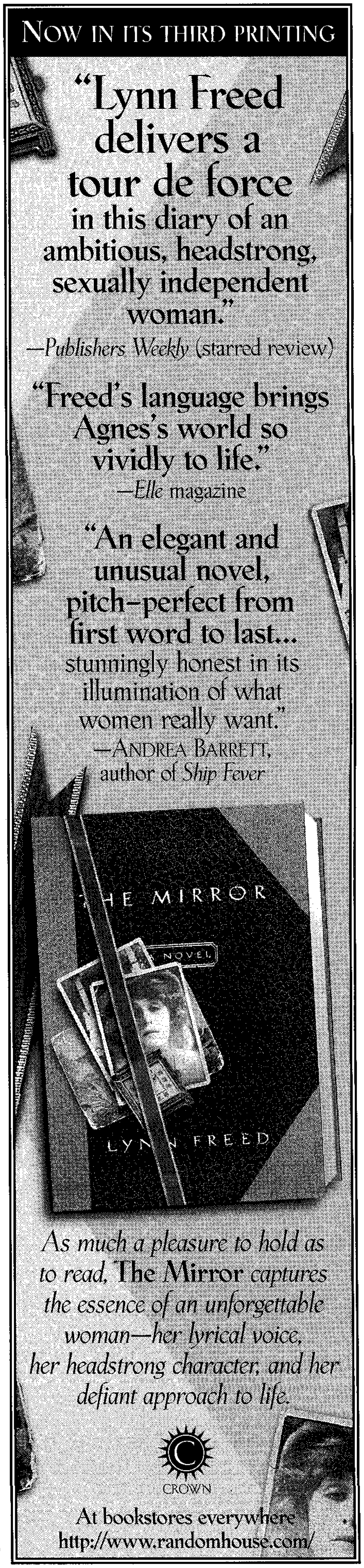
“Settle down,” said Walt. “There’s no cause for alarm.”

“I won’t let them have it. You’ve got to help me get out. I won’t make it if they take my leg. I know I won’t.” He had a raging fever and had been acting a little delirious.

“Dr. Walker is said to wield the fastest knife in the Army. You’ll be asleep. You won’t feel it.”

“Ha!” said Hank. He gave Walt a long, wild look. “Ha!” He put his face in his pillow and wouldn’t talk anymore. Walt walked around the wards, meeting the new boys. He went to the chapel. The limbs piled higher in the deadhouse, many of them joined there soon by their former proprietors.

That night, unable to sleep, he made his usual tour of the city, stopping for a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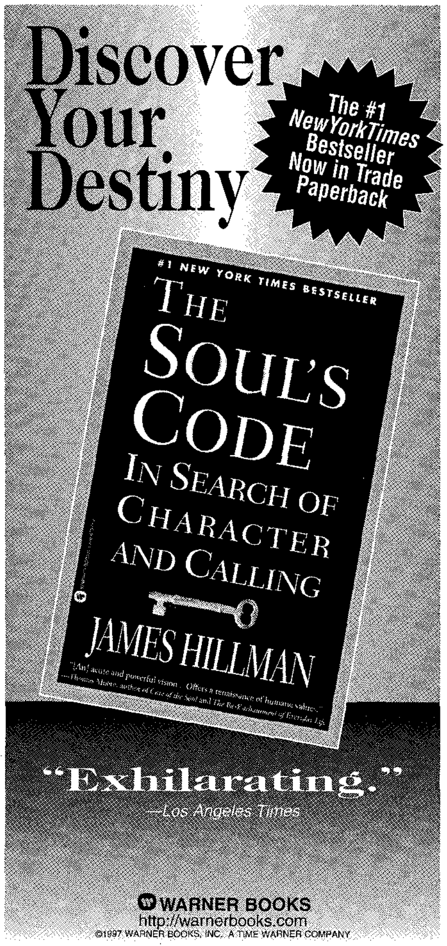
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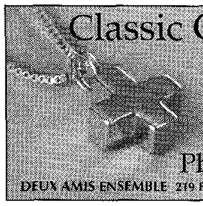
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long time outside Union Square. He found himself outside Hank's window, and then inside, next to his bed. Hank was sleeping, his arm thrown up above his head, his sheet thrown off and his shirt riding up his belly. Walt reached out and touched his shoulder.

"All right," Walt said. "Let's go." It was not a difficult escape. The hardest part was getting Hank's pants on. It was very painful for him to bend his knee, and he was feverish, disoriented. They saw no one on their way out; the night attendants were in another ward. They stole a crutch for Hank. He fell on the Mall, and the crutch broke under him. He wept softly with his mouth in the grass. Walt picked him up and carried him on his back, toward the canal and over it, then into Murder Bay. Hank cried to be put down. They rested on a trash heap teeming with small crawly things that were unidentifiable in the dark.

"I think I want to sleep," said Hank. "I'm so tired."

"Go ahead, my dear," said Walt. "I shall take care of you."

"I would like to go home." He put his head against Walt's shoulder. "Take me back to Hollow Vale. I want to see my sister." He slowly fell asleep, still mumbling under his breath. They sat there for a little while. Some people passed them but did not disturb them. If this heap were a horse, thought Walt, we could ride to California. "Never mind General Stuart," he said aloud, taking Hank's wet hand in his own. "In California there is no sickness. Neither is there death. On their fifth birthday, every child is made a gift of a pony." He looked at Hank's drawn face glowing eerily in the moonlight and said, "In California if you plant a dead boy under an oak tree, in just one day's time a living hand will emerge from the soil. If you grasp that hand and pull with the heart of a true friend a living body will come out of the earth. Thus in California death never separates true friends." He looked for a while longer into Hank's face. His eyes were darting wildly under the lids. Walt said, "Well, if we are to get there soon we had best be going now." But when he picked him up he brought him back to the hospital.

"YOU will wash that beard before you come into my surgery," said Dr. Woodhull. Walt stank of garbage. He went to a basin, and Dr. Walker helped him scrub his beard with creosote, potassium permanganate, and Labarraque's solution. Walt held a sponge soaked with chloroform under Hank's nose, even though he hadn't woken since falling asleep on the heap. He kept his hand on Hank's head the whole time, though he could not watch as Dr. Walker cut in and Dr. Woodhull tied up the arteries. He looked down and saw blood seeping across the floor, into mounds of sawdust. Looking up, he fixed his attention on a lithograph on the far wall. It had been torn from some book of antiquities, a depiction of reclining sick under the care of the priests of Asclepius, whose statue dominated the temple. There was a snake-entwined staff in his hand, and a big friendly-looking stone dog at his feet. A large caption beneath the picture read, "Every night for a thousand years the sick sought refuge and dreams in the Temple of Asclepius." He closed his eyes and heard the saw squeak against Hank's bones.

HANK woke briefly before he died. "They got my leg," he said. "You let them take it."

"No," said Walt. "I've got it right here." In fact, he did. It lay in his lap, bundled in two clean white sheets. It could have been anything. He would not let them take it to the deadhouse. He put it in the bed. Hank hugged it tight against his chest.

"I don't want to die," he said.

HE packed his bag and sat on it, waiting at the station for the train that would take him back to Brooklyn. The train came and went; he stayed sitting on his bag. Then he got up and went back to Union Square. It was night. Hank's bed was still empty. He sat down on it and rummaged for a pen and paper. When he had them, he wrote in the dark:

DEAR FRIENDS,

I thought it would be soothing to you to have a few lines about the last days of your son, Henry Smith—I write in haste, but I have no doubt anything about Hank will be welcome.

From the time he came—there was hardly a day but I was with him a portion of the time—if not in the day then at night—(I am merely a friend visiting the wounded and sick soldiers). From almost the first I felt somehow that Hank was in danger, or at least was much worse than they supposed in the hospital. As he made no complaint they thought him nothing so bad. I told the doctor of the ward over and over again he was a very sick boy, but he took it lightly and said he would certainly recover; he said, "I know more about these fever cases than you do—he looks very sick to you, but I shall bring him out all right—" Probably the doctor did his best—at any rate about a week before Hank died he got really alarmed, and after that he and all the other doctors tried to help him but it was too late. Very possibly it would not have made any difference.

I used to sit by the side of his bed generally silent, he was opprest for breath and with the heat, and I would fan him—occasionally he would want a drink—somedays he dozed a great deal—sometimes when I would come in he woke up and I would lean down and kiss him, he would reach out his hand and pat my hair and beard as I sat on the bed and leaned over him—it was painful to see the working in his throat to breathe.

Some nights I sat by his cot far into the night, the lights would be put out and I sat there silently hour after hour—he seemed to like to have me sit there— I shall never forget those nights in the dark hospital, it was a curious and solemn scene, the sick and the wounded lying around and this dear young man close by me, lying on what proved to be his death-bed. I did not know his past life, but what I saw and know of he behaved like a noble boy— Farewell, deary boy, it was my opportunity to be with you in your last days. I had no chance to do much for you; nothing could be done—only you did not lie there among strangers without having one near who loved you dearly, and to whom you gave your dying kiss.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith, I have thus written rapidly whatever came up about Hank, and must now close. Though we are strangers and shall probably never see each other, I send you all Hank's brothers and sisters my love. I live when at home in Brooklyn, New York, in Portland Avenue, fourth floor, north of Myrtle.

He folded up the letter and put it in his shirt, then lay down on his side on the bed. In a while a nurse came by with fresh sheets. She thought she might scold him and tell him to leave, but when she looked in his face she turned and hurried off. He watched the moon come up in the window, listening to the wounded and sick stirring in the beds around him. It seemed to him, as he watched the moon shine down on the dome of the Capitol, that the war would never end. He thought, In the morning I will rise and leave this place. And then he thought, I will never leave this place. He slept briefly and had a dream of reaching into Hank Smith's dark grave, hoping and fearing that somebody would take his groping hand. He woke with the moon still shining in his face. Somewhere down the ward a boy began to weep. ◆

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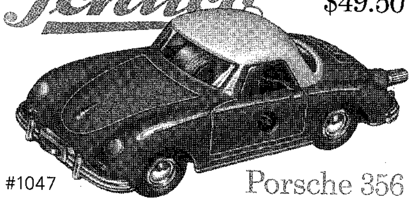

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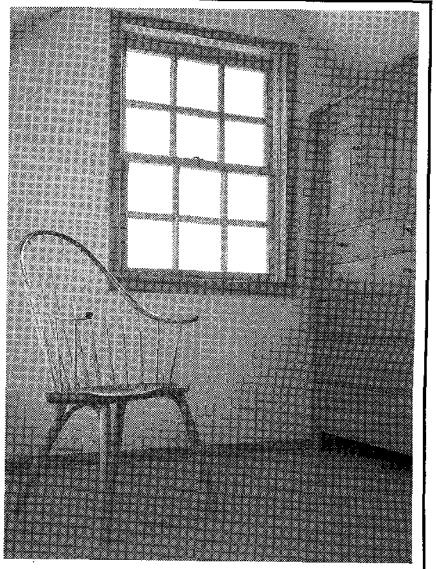

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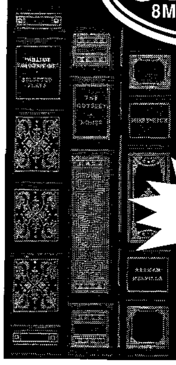

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THE HARSH ANGEL

The revolutionary who could find no revolt to please him.

BY ALMA GUILLERMOPRIETO

So many incinerated lives: the would-be guerrillas who starved to death in northern Argentina, the young men drowned in vats of excrement in Brazil, the eviscerated martyrs of Guatemala, the sociology student in Argentina whose severed hands were delivered in a jar to her mother: the children of Che. The slogans that defined those furious and hopeful times—"Two, three, many Vietnams!" and "The first duty of a revolutionary is to make the Revolution"—were Che's slogans. They sound foolish and empty now, but because it was Ernesto (Che) Guevara, the guerrilla hero, who pronounced them they were heard and followed around the world. The range of his influence spans almost the entire latter half of the twentieth century.

He was the century's first Latin-American: an astonishing fact, given that hundreds of millions of people in the hemisphere are joined by the same language, the same Iberian culture, the same religion, the same monstrously deformed class system, the same traditions of violence and rancor. Despite those essential bonds, Latin America's twenty-one nations lived in determined isolation and a common mistrust until Che came along and, through his acts, proclaimed himself a citizen of them all. He was an artist of scorn, heaping it on the sanctimonious, the officiously bureaucratic, the unimaginatively conformist, who whispered eagerly that the way things were was the best way that could be arranged. He was a living banner, determined to renounce all the temptations of power and to change the world by example. And he was a fanatic, consumed by restlessness and a frighteningly abstract hatred, who in the end recognized only one moral value as supreme: the willingness to be slaughtered for a cause.

Another astonishing fact is that so many members of my generation, who were just coming of age at the time of his death, wanted to be like him, and to obey him, even while we knew so little about him. It was only after he was hunted down by Bolivian Army forces, on October 8, 1967, and the unforgettable picture of his corpse—emaciated torso, tousled hair, and liquid, vacant eyes—was displayed on the front pages of newspapers around the world that Che became familiar to young people. It was in death that he became known. Three biographies have come out this year. Two of them—"Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life," by Jon Lee Anderson (Grove; $35), and "Compañero: The Life and Death of Che Guevara," by Jorge Castañeda (Knopf; $30)—are groundbreaking: they take on the difficult task of demolishing the Che legend, as it was created and nurtured over the decades by the Cuban regime he had helped found. The third, "Guevara: Also Known as Che," by Paco Ignacio Taibo II (St. Martin's; $35), hews too closely to the official myth. Taibo, best known outside Mexico as the author of a number of inventive detective novels, is an engaging and lively writer, but his hagiography is intended only for the true believer.

Anderson's book is an epic end run around the guardians of the Che legend. A journalist who has made a career writing about wars and guerrillas, Anderson lived in Cuba for three years in order to do this project, and he persuaded Che's second wife, Aleida March, to let him read Che's private diaries. He also seems to have talked to everyone else still alive who ever knew Guevara, and one of the things that such dogged reporting has enabled him to do is to tell us, in wonderful new detail, about the hero as a youth.

Ernesto Guevara de la Serna was born in Argentina in 1928, the son of an intellectually curious, high-strung mother and a debonair, womanizing father who ran through his wife's fortune and never quite managed to get any of his own business schemes off the ground. The couple fought constantly, and the father slept sometimes on the living-room sofa, sometimes in another house. At the age of two, Ernestito, the firstborn and favorite of the Guevaras' children (they had five), developed asthma, and for long stretches throughout his childhood he was bedridden. Spurred on by his mother, Celia, he became a precocious and methodical reader and a stoic patient. As with Teddy Roosevelt, physical hardship and endurance became a habit, and Ernesto seems never to have succumbed to the invalid's temptation to engage in complaint and self-indulgence.

In adolescence, and at least partly as a response to his handicap, Ernesto emerged as a full-fledged macho, having his way with the family maids (once literally behind the back of his favorite and very straitlaced aunt, who was then sitting primly at the dining-room table); refusing at the age of fifteen to attend a protest demonstration because he did not have a revolver; making it a point of pride never to bathe. (His upper-middle-class schoolmates remember his nickname, Chancho, or Pig, not so much because it was ugly as because he was so proud of it.) Before his machismo destroyed him, it served him well: it tempered his will and spurred him to become an athlete—one who, despite the crippling asthma, always made a point of outracing, outkicking, and outhiking his less exigent peers. (Machismo also gave him style: in the midst of his physical exploits, he would stop and suck on his inhaler for a few moments, or give himself a quick adrenaline injection through his clothes, and then return to the field.)

At twenty-two, when he was studying medicine in Buenos Aires, he discovered that the life of a wanderer suited him. Interrupting his studies, he left home and motorbiked alone through northern Argentina. The following year, he and his best friend embarked on an eight-month hitchhiking adventure: it took them through northern Argentina again and then on to Chile, Peru, Co-

Guevara could not bear the natural ambivalence of the world and found relief from it only in the rigors of battle.

lombia, Venezuela, and, finally, the United States. He was already a disciplined diarist, and a few years later, when he was no longer signing himself "Pig" but, rather, "Che," he took his notes from that trip and turned them into a book. It was translated into English in 1995 and became a brisk seller for the British publishing house Verso, under the title "The Motorcycle Diaries."

The diarist is an idealistic young medical student who has chosen his profession as a way of doing good in the world but otherwise does not think much about politics. The living conditions of the people he travels among shock him, but he is just as susceptible to the wonder of Machu Picchu. He comes across as high-spirited—jumping into a cold lake to retrieve a downed duck—endlessly curious, amusing, and very likable: "Allergic as I am to the cold, swimming . . . made me suffer like a bedouin. Just as well that roast duck, seasoned as usual by our hunger, is an exquisite dish."

By his own account, this jolly and enthusiastic young man was buried forever at the expedition's close. The last section of "The Motorcycle Diaries" is eerie. In a dreamlike, utterly different voice, he recounts a meeting with a mysterious prophet, who tells him that revolution will come to Latin America, and that it will destroy those who cannot join it. After recounting this conversation, Guevara writes:

> I knew that when the great guiding spirit cleaves humanity into two antagonistic halves, I will be with the people. . . . Howling like a man possessed, [I] will assail the barricades and trenches, will stain my weapon with blood and, consumed with rage, will slaughter any enemy I lay hands on.

We will probably never know when Guevara tacked this final entry onto the original, beguiling text, or what circumstances provoked it. We do know that his discovery of the revolutionary faith transformed him, as a writer, into a hopeless termagant. And we know something more remarkable: that the words he wrote were not simply a young man's posturing, for from the time of his final departure from Argentina the following year, 1953, to the moment of his death, in 1967, the asthmatic, footloose, irreverent diarist sought to become the iron-willed avenger of his prophecy. Another idealistic and enterprising young man, upon being confronted with the poverty, racism, and injustice that Guevara sees and records in "The Motorcycle Diaries," might have strengthened his commitment to medicine, or thought of ways to give Latin America's poor the weapon of literacy. For reasons that even the most ambitious biographer can only speculate on—rage against his father, love of humanity—Guevara decided instead to spend his life creating Che, the harsh angel.

GUEVARA remained a pilgrim for another three years, waiting for a cause to find him. During that time, he floated northward again, read Marx and Lenin, and decided that he was a Marxist. In Bolivia in 1953, he was a skeptical witness of Víctor Paz Estenssoro's populist revolution, whose limited—but hardly insignificant—achievements included the liberation of the Indian peasantry from virtual fiefdom and the establishment of universal suffrage. For his part, Guevara never considered any alternatives to violence and radicalism, and perhaps it is true that in the Latin America of those years it required more self-delusion to be a moderate reformer than to be a utopian revolutionary. At any rate, a nine-month stay in Guatemala was cut short by the 1954 coup against the reformist government of Jacobo Arbenz—a coup sponsored by the Central Intelligence Agency. This monumentally stupid event not only set Guatemala on the road to decades of bloodshed but confirmed Che's conviction that in politics only those willing to shed blood make a difference.

In late 1954, Guevara arrived in Mexico, and he spent two years there that would have been listless and inconsequential but for two events. He made an unhappy marriage to a Peruvian radical he had first met in Guatemala, Hilda Gadea, and he had a child with her. (Guevara and women is a nasty subject. Anderson, ever attentive to his subject's sex life, quotes from Guevara's unpublished diary on the courtship: "Hilda declared her love in epistolary and practical form. I was with a lot of asthma, if not I might have fucked her. . . . The little letter she left me upon leaving is very good, too bad she is so ugly.") And he met Fidel Castro, who

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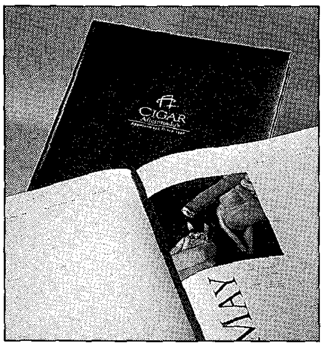

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arrived in Mexico in 1955, fresh from a two-year imprisonment in Cuba, following his disastrous assault on the Moncada Army barracks.

There is no record of Ernesto Guevara's ever before, or subsequently, expressing unrestrained admiration for a fellow-being. Fidel, with his natural bonhomie, energy, and boundless faith in his own leadership, was the exception. The chemistry was mutual: Fidel trusted him, relied on him, and, on the evidence, loved him more than any of his other comrades, with the possible exception of Celia Sánchez (Fidel's closest companion until her death, in 1980). Guevara's relationship to love, whether it involved his parents, his comrades, or his women, was uneasy, but his love of Fidel was wholehearted and transforming, because it opened the path to the life he was seeking. Within hours of their first meeting, Guevara signed on as a medic for Fidel's hare-brained plan to land an expedition on the eastern end of Cuba and start an insurrection against the dictator Fulgencio Batista.

In November of 1956, the creaky yacht Granma set sail from Veracruz, bound for Cuba and glory. By then, the Argentine Guevara, who, like all his countrymen, interjected the word *che*—roughly, "man," or "you"—at least once in every sentence (as in "Hey, *che*, is that the way to clean a rifle, *che*?"), had been rebaptized. He would be, forevermore, *el Che*—the Argentine. It was a term that underlined not only the affection and respect his comrades felt for him but also their intense awareness of his differentness, his permanent standing as a foreigner in the revolution he had adopted as his own.

He was keenly aware of his outsider status as he sailed for Cuba. Other portents must have been harder for him to see. There was his medical training, for example, which had drilled into him the universality of the principle of the scientific cure (that is, that penicillin, say, will get rid of pneumonia in both a French peasant and a Mexican socialite). A central flaw in his thinking for the rest of his life was to assume that what he learned about guerrilla warfare in the process of overthrowing Batista amounted to a prescription—a necessary remedy for every form of social disease. Another flaw was that he

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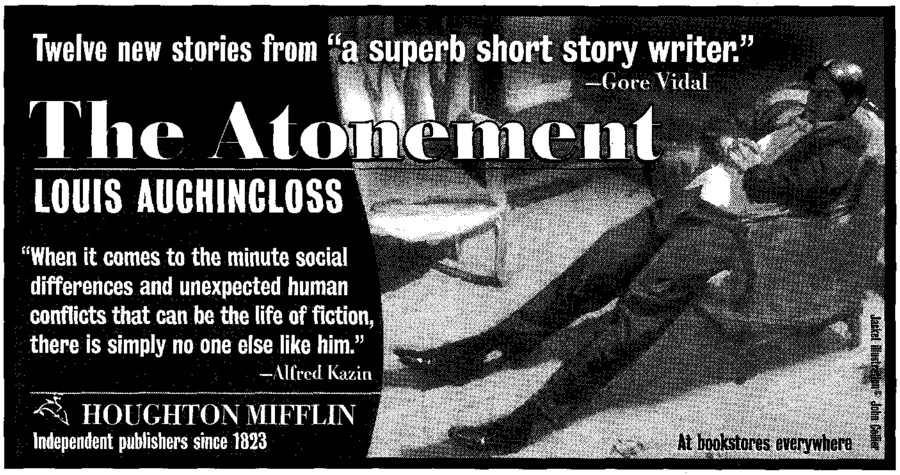

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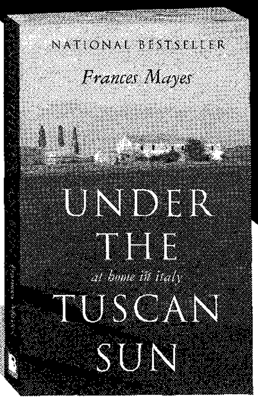

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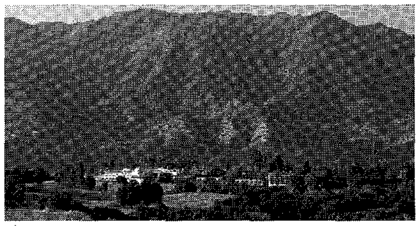

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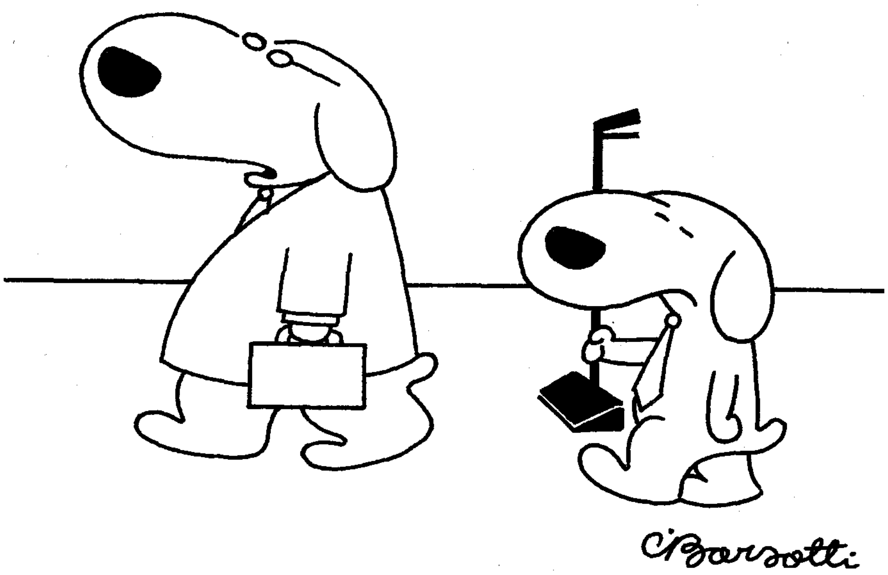


"Now, now, Harrison, we all start somewhere."

• •

was inescapably committed to a certain definition of virility and to the code of conduct it implied: a macho definition, not unusual among Latin-Americans of his generation. As a result, he found it unbearably humiliating ever to lose face, back down, admit defeat. He could not see that Sancho Panza might be as heroic as Quixote. And he was as blind to nuances of character as he was tone-deaf: for all the painful insights into his own nature which he reveals in his diaries, and for all his astute observations in them on landscape, warfare, and political dynamics, there are no credible portraits of his fellow-men. There are only revolutionaries, who are full of virtue, and counter-revolutionaries, who are worthless.

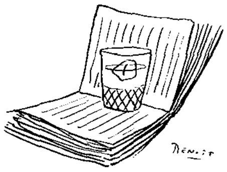
The next chapter in Che's life coincides with one of the century's most startling military triumphs. Having landed as disastrously as was to be expected on Cuba's shores, Che, Fidel Castro, Fidel's brother, Raúl, and a handful of others survived Batista's ferocious assault and went on to forge the beginnings of a revolutionary army in the Sierra Maestra. By 1958, Che's military intuition and daring, his organizational skills, and his outstanding personal bravery had won him the undisputed title of Comandante and a leading role in the revolution. Sharing his life with Cubans, who have always held ablutions and nattiness to be almost supreme virtues, Guevara still refused to bathe, or even tie his shoelaces, but now that he was Che his odorous aura was part of a mystique. He was roughing it in the great outdoors, planning strategy with Fidel, sharing his camp cot with a stunning *mulata*, risking his life and proving his manhood on a daily basis. His days, as he narrates them in "Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War" (again, reworked pages from his diary turned into a book), read blissfully like an adventure out of *Boys' Life*. And yet it is at this point, according to Anderson, that Che wrote in his unpublished diary:

> A little combat broke out in which we retreated very quickly. The position was bad and they were encircling us, but we put up little resistance. Personally I noted something I had never felt before: the need to live. That had better be corrected in the next opportunity.

Happiness and the desire for it—"the need to live"—were, in a revolutionary, symptoms of weakness.

CHE'S life following the revolution's triumph was a slow accretion of wreckage, and it is in the narration of this collapse that "Compañero," Jorge Castañeda's beautiful and passionate biography, is most lucid. We turn the pages hoping that the trouble will end soon, that Guevara may be spared, or spare himself, if not from failure, then from ludicrous defeat; if not from hideous physical suffering, then from death; if not from death, then from ignominy. But Castañeda is as unflinching as his hero: he has searched C.I.A. records and the recollections of Guevara's closest comrades in order to prise away layers of after-the-fact justifications and embellishments of the Che legend. In the process, he makes Ernesto Guevara understandable at last, and his predicament deeply moving.

Castañeda's Che is a man who could not bear the natural ambivalence of the world, and found relief from it (and, curiously, from the torment of asthma) only in the unequivocal rigors of battle and radicalism. Appointed first to the National Agrarian Reform Institute and then to head the central bank in Fidel's revolutionary regime, he was, like so many other battle heroes, before and after him, flummoxed by the day-to-day realities of governance. Why should Cuba have a monetary policy that sought to placate imperialism? Why was it necessary to compensate exploiters and oppressors for their sugar-cane haciendas instead of merely expropriating the land for *el pueblo*? Why corrupt workers by offering them more money to work harder? Che nearly killed himself accumulating "volunteer work hours" of his own, cutting cane and stacking sacks of sugar after the gruelling hours he put in at his desk, in order to prove that moral incentives could beat lucre as a stimulus to productivity. He may have begun to suspect toward the end of his stay in Cuba that other mortals liked to put their free time to a different use. He certainly believed that the revolution's leadership was tacking dangerously toward pragmatism. "The New Man"—a new type of human being that the revolution was to manufacture—was not being turned out swiftly enough.



Che was unable to deal with his disapproval of the course that Fidel was taking and his simultaneous love for the man; with his disillusionment with the Soviet Union and the self-satisfaction of the burgeoning Cuban bureaucracy; with the palace intrigues of the new regime (particularly those of Fidel's brother Raúl); and, probably, with the gnawing awareness of his own failings as a peacetime revolutionary. It seems reasonable to interpret his decision to leave Cuba as Casteñeda does—as the result of his need to get away from so much internal conflict. (In the course of explaining this decision, Castañeda provides an extraordinary account of the ins and outs of Cuban state policy, Cuban-Soviet relations, and Castro's dealings with the United States.) Che was leaving behind a second wife, six children, his comrades, his years of happiness, and the revolution he had helped give birth to; none of these were enough to convince him that he belonged.

Guevara's original intention was to return to his homeland and start a guerrilla movement there. A 1965 expedition to the Congo, where various armed factions were still wrestling for power long after the overthrow and murder of Patrice Lumumba, and his last stand in Bolivia, Castañeda writes, followed improbably from Fidel's anxious efforts to keep Che away from Argentina, where he was sure to be detected and murdered by Latin America's most efficient security forces. Castro seems to have felt that the Congo would be a safer place, and the question of whether it was a more intelligent choice doesn't seem to have been addressed either by him or by the man he was trying to protect. (In Cairo, Jon Lee Anderson notes, Gamal Abdel Nasser warned Che not to get militarily involved in Africa, because there he would be "like Tarzan, a white man among blacks, leading and protecting them.")

As things turned out, the Congo episode was a farce, so absurd that Cuban authorities kept secret Che's rueful draft for a book on it—until recently, that is, when one of his new biographers, Taibo, was able to study the original manuscript. Guevara was abandoned from the beginning by Congolese military leaders, like Laurent Kabila, who had initially welcomed his offer of help. He was plagued by dysentery and was subject to fits of uncontrollable anger, and emerged from seven months in the jungle forty pounds lighter, sick, and severely depressed. If he had ever considered a decision to cut bait and return to Cuba, that option was cancelled weeks before the Congo expedition's rout: on October 5, 1965, Fidel Castro, pressed on all sides to explain Che's disappearance from Cuba and unable to recognize that the African adventure was about to

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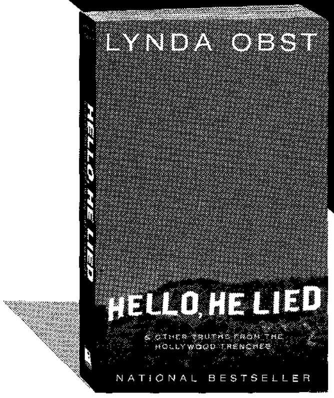

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collapse, decided to make public Che's farewell letter to him: "I will say once again that the only way that Cuba can be held responsible for my actions is in its example. If my time should come under other skies, my last thought will be for this people, and especially for you."

Guevara was sitting in a miserable campsite on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, bored, frustrated, and in mourning for his mother, when he was told that Fidel had publicized the letter. The news hit him like an explosion. "Shit-eaters!" he said, pacing back and forth in the mud. "They are imbeciles, idiots."

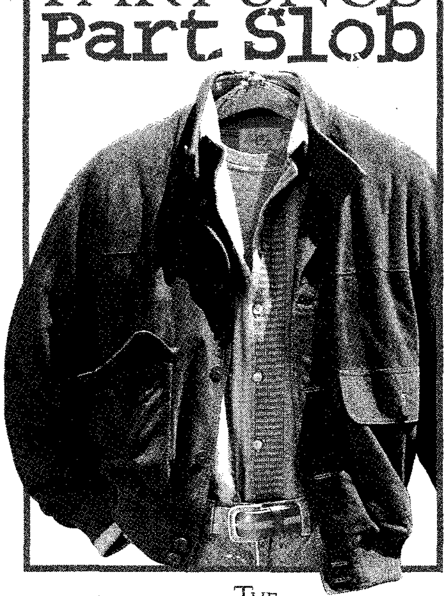
GUEVARA'S final trek began at this moment, because once his farewell to Fidel was made public, as Castañeda writes, "his bridges were effectively burned. Given his temperament, there was now no way he could return to Cuba, even temporarily. The idea of a public deception was unacceptable to him: once he had said he was leaving, he could not go back." He could not bear to lose face.

A few months later, having taken full and bitter stock of his situation, he made the decision to set up a guerrilla base—intended as a training camp, really—in southern Bolivia, near the border with Argentina. From there, he convinced himself, he would ultimately be able to spark the revolutionary flame in Argentina and, from there, throughout the world.

He knew, of course, that his death would fan that flame. One wonders if he had any sense in the final awful weeks of how badly things would end, not just for him but for everyone involved in the ubiquitous attempts at armed radical revolution that followed upon his death. I am thinking now of Guatemala, which, more than any other country in the hemisphere besides Cuba, formed Guevara's view of the world and was a testing ground for his ideas about class warfare and the struggle for liberation, and which paid the price. And I am thinking of the Guatemalans I knew, like the poet Alaíde Foppa, a feminist editor, art historian, and critic, who was a great friend of my mother's. Alaíde had lived in exile in Mexico with her husband, Alfonso Solórzano, since the 1954 coup against Arbenz. They had five children, including Mario, who returned to Guatemala in the late seventies to found an opposition newspaper. The youngest, Juan Pablo, joined a Guatemalan guerrilla organization. The group's founders, who had trained in Cuba and been directly encouraged by Che, shared his faith that a small group of steel-willed men could win the people's support and overthrow an unjust regime, no matter how large or well trained the enemy's army might be, or what foreign powers might decide to intervene. In 1979, Juan Pablo was captured by the military, and killed. In Mexico City two weeks later, his despondent father died when he walked into oncoming traffic.

Just before Christmas of the following year, 1980, I arrived in Mexico from Central America, expecting to spend Christmas Eve with my mother at Alaíde's house. That did not happen, however, because when I walked into my mother's apartment I found her holding the phone, silent with shock. Alaíde, following her son's death, had apparently made the decision to match his sacrifice: she travelled to Guatemala City on a courier mission for the guerrillas, and there, the caller on the phone had just told my mother, she was almost instantly detected and "disappeared" by the security forces. According to her relatives, she was kept alive and tortured for months. Her corpse has never been found.

And then Mario was killed. I had last seen him the previous year. We had had dinner in Mexico City, and he had listened joyfully to my account of the Sandinistas' overthrow of Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua—a spectacularly unforeseen event, which I had covered as a reporter, and which had revitalized flagging guerrilla forces everywhere. I had no idea that within weeks of my meeting with Mario he himself would go underground, joining the guerrillas' urban infrastructure in the Guatemalan capital. He learned in clandestinity of his mother's disappearance, and then he, too, was betrayed. Someone revealed the location of his safe house to the Army (probably under torture, which true revolutionaries, unlike other human beings, were supposed to resist to the end, but rarely did), and Mario was ambushed and killed. This occurred during a period of weeks when the mil-



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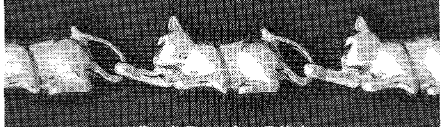

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itary regime unleashed a campaign of systematic massacre directed against Mayan campesinos who had joined the guerrilla group that Mario belonged to. Because the campesinos were poorly trained and poorly armed, and the Army troops were not, and because support for the guerrillas was only substantial, and not overwhelming, thousands of impoverished men and women paid with their lives for their revolutionary beliefs. It was only last year, after twenty years of brutal struggle, that peace was signed in Guatemala.

Alaíde and Mario appear in my memory whenever I try to make sense of those fervid times. I remember my mother, too, who, having been forced at last out of her distrust of politics, stood timidly in a crowd in front of the Guatemalan Embassy and whispered slogans against the dictatorship (she hated crowds and slogans, and did not know how to shout), because something had to be done even though there was nothing left to do. Alaíde was exceptional only in that she was sixty-seven when she responded to the call issued in Havana by Fidel on the day he told Cubans that Ernesto Guevara was dead. "Be like Che!" Fidel cried, and the exhortation gave purpose to an entire generation that desperately needed a way of being in the modern world, a way to act that could fill life with meaning and transcendence. But, in the end, Che, who, unlike Fidel, was quite uncurious about how the real world worked—why people supported or failed to support a cause, how General Motors turned out cars, what accounted for the Mexican ruling party's longevity—could offer only one course of action, and this was his tragedy, and that of Alaíde and her children: the only way to be like Che was to die like him, and all those deaths were not enough to create the perfect world that Che wanted.

I THINK of Che, starving and thirsty in Bolivia, hardly able to walk, because of weakness and asthma, and lost, wandering in circles with a handful of comrades through the scrubby Bolivian highlands while the Army and its C.I.A. advisers drew their noose tighter. (Perhaps, Castañeda speculates, he and his hopeless cause had been abandoned at this stage by the support network in Cuba.) His companions on this dismal trek were men who had signed on, out of devotion to him, for what was evidently a suicide mission, but he would deprive them of what meagre rations there were as punishment for the smallest act of indiscipline, and call them trash. Che, who loved animals, wrote in his diary that he had stabbed his skinny mare in a fit of rage and frustration. One can see from his account how diminished and stilted were the emotions he dared allow himself three months before he was killed, and how very stubborn he was:

> I am a human wreck and the episode with the little mare proves that at moments I have lost control; this will be rectified but the situation must weigh evenly on all of us, and whoever doesn't feel capable of bearing the load must say so. This is one of those moments in which large decisions must be made: this type of struggle gives us the opportunity to become revolutionaries, the highest rank in the human species, but it also allows us to graduate as men. Those who are incapable of achieving either of these two stages should say so and abandon the struggle.

Guevara was born in Latin America's hour of the hero. So many of our leaders have been so corrupt, and the range of allowed and possible public activity has been so narrow, and injustice has cried out so piercingly to the heavens, that only a hero could answer the call, and only a heroic mode of life could seem worthy. Guevara stood out against the inflamed horizon of his time, alone and unique.

There is, however, a problem with the heroic figure (as the Cubans, who kept Che's diaries and documents secret all this while, perceived), and that is that the hero can have no faults, and is answerable, as Che was, only to his own exalted sense of honor. This picture of the hero is still satisfying to large numbers of Latin Americans who are not in a position to exact an accounting from their leaders but do, on the other hand, demand that their leaders act grandly and provoke fervor and states of rapture, as the dead Che now does. But the living Che was not the perfect hero for his time and place: he demanded that others follow his impossible example, and never understood how to combine what he wanted with what was achievable. It remains forever a matter of debate whether Che's life and example speeded the advent of the present era, in which there are no perfect causes, and where men like him are more than ever out of place. ♦

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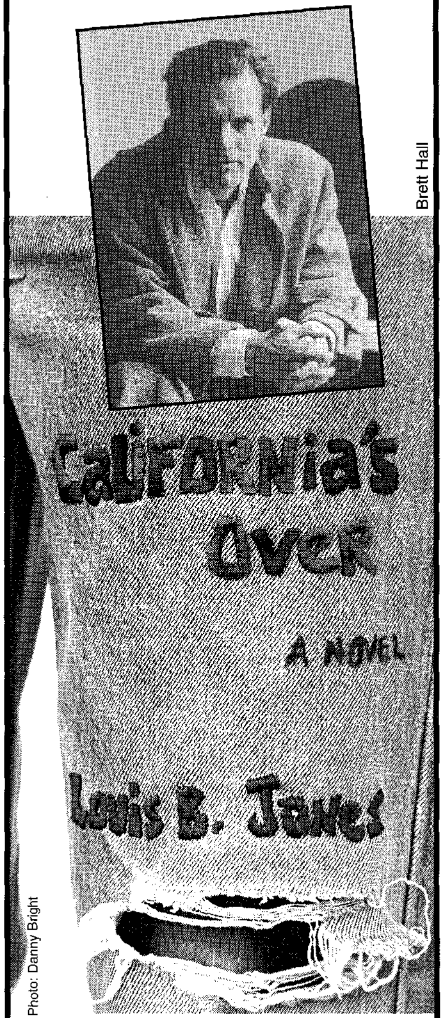

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BOOKS

HOW TO FRIGHTEN SMALL CHILDREN

The complicated pleasure of kids' books.

BY LOUIS MENAND

IT must have occurred to many parents to wonder whether the children in Dr. Seuss's "The Cat in the Hat" aren't a little young to be left at home all day under the supervision of a fish. It is, admittedly, an unusual fish, a fish with a highly developed sense of propriety and the ability, despite a limited vocabulary, to articulate its views with force and conviction. Still, the world is a dangerous place, and a fish, after all, is a fish. This one proves no match even for a cat—and big surprise. When has a fish ever got the better of a cat, or, for that matter, of anything much larger than plankton? What could this mother possibly have been thinking?

It is unlikely that the cavalier nature of the child-care arrangements in "The Cat in the Hat" has ever escaped the notice of a child. The premise of most children's stories is that all sorts of wonderful things can happen when grownups aren't around, and at some level children probably believe this. But abandonment is the most terrifying circumstance they can imagine, and that is why a tiny particle of fear is almost always an ingredient in the complicated pleasure children take in children's books. It's why children prefer to be securely seated on the lap of a parent when they listen to stories about how marvellous a place the world might be if parents disappeared.

Few books are as much fun to read aloud as "The Cat in the Hat," but it was not written to be read aloud, and it was not much fun to write. The book took Theodor Geisel—Dr. Seuss—more than a year to finish; he described the experience as "being lost with a witch in the tunnel of love," an analogy it is probably best to leave unpacked. The idea for the book was not his. It came from an editor at Houghton Mifflin named William Spaulding, who had apparently been persuaded by a best-seller called "Why Johnny Can't Read" that American schools were producing a generation of illiterates. "Why Johnny Can't Read" was published in 1955; its author was Rudolph Flesch, a graduate of Columbia Teacher's College. The book is an attack on the use of primers such as the "Dick and Jane" books to teach first graders to read. Primers teach by word recognition: kids essentially memorize each new word. Flesch argued that beginning readers ought to be learning not words but phonemes—the sounds out of which words are made—on the theory that this equips them to make sense of unfamiliar-looking words by sounding them out. He filled the back of his book with lists of words organized phonically—one-syllable words with hard "c" sounds, with short "a" sounds, with "t" sounds, and so on.

The other problem with the "Dick and Jane" books, of course, is that they're incredibly boring. Spaulding's idea was to commission a children's book designed for a phonics-based curriculum which was also fun to read—"a story that first-graders can't put down!," as he put it, in the language of publishers everywhere. Geisel had been writing successful children's books since 1937. He didn't have a problem with the "can't put down" part. His problem was with the phonics part. Spaulding handed him a list of two hundred and twenty-five words, on the model of Flesch's lists, and explained that they constituted the entire permissible vocabulary for the book Geisel was to write. For a long time, Geisel could make nothing of it. Then he decided, in desperation, to turn the first two words that rhymed into his title, and the Cat in the Hat was born. He ended up using two hundred and twenty-three of the two hundred and twenty-five words on Spaulding's list, and (as the Cat puts it) that is not all: he set them in rhymed anapestic dimeter as well. It was like making a three-star meal out

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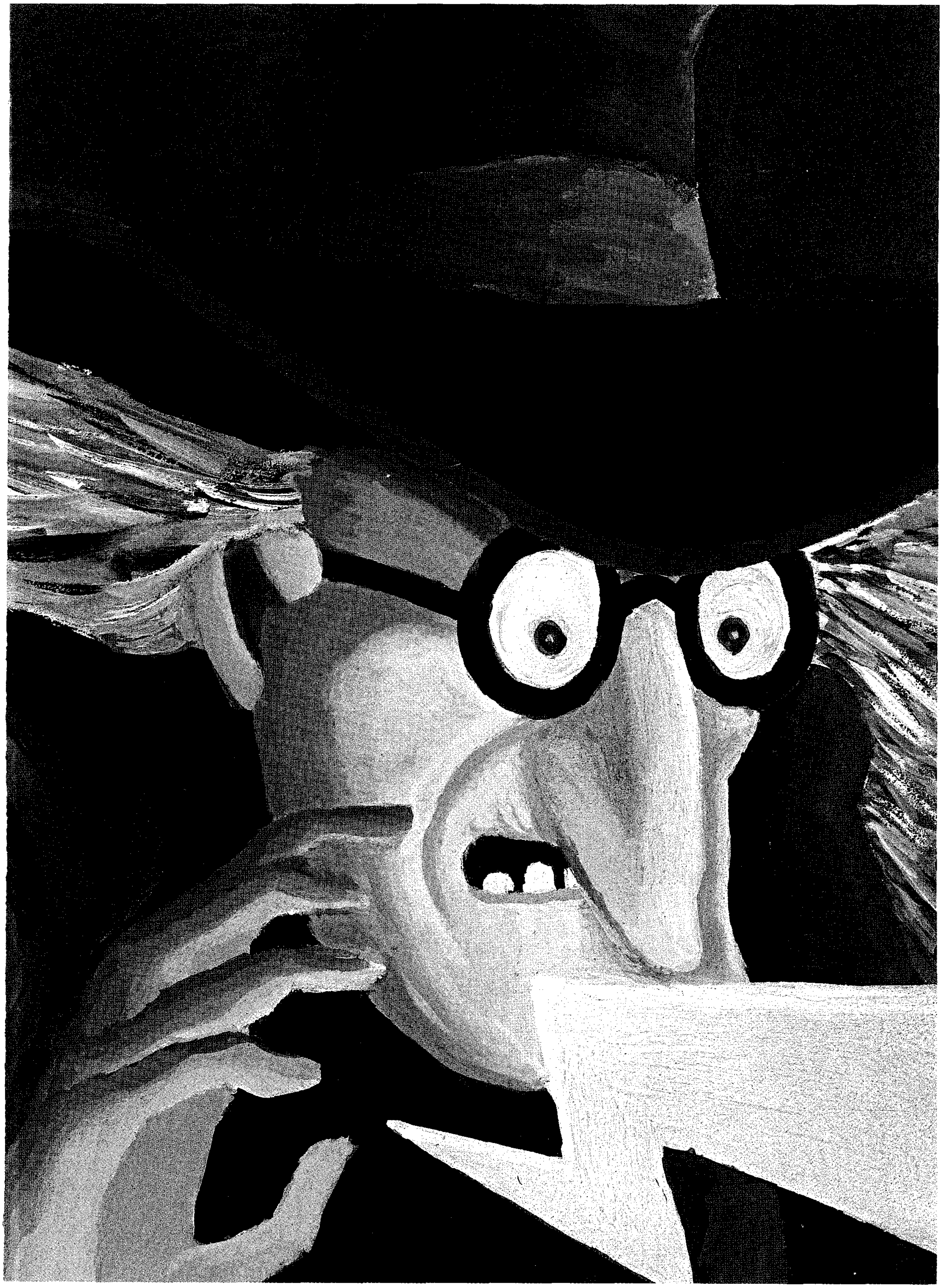
Children prefer to be securely seated on a pa



hile hearing how marvellous the world might be if parents disappeared. Illustration from Art Spiegelman's "Open Me... I'm a Dog!"

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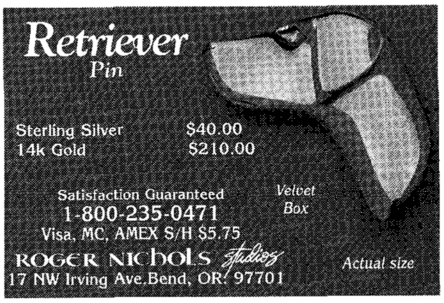

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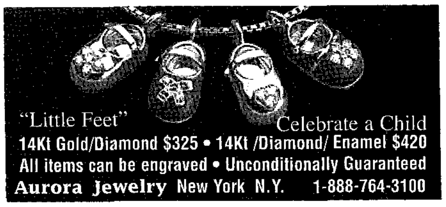

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of leftovers, or composing a sonata using only the first five notes of the scale. This year marks the book's fortieth anniversary.

"The Cat in the Hat" appeared in the year of the Sputnik and the quiz-show scandals. It was perfectly timed to respond to anxieties about a failing educational system and the dumbing effects of television (a major theme, as it happens, of "Why Johnny Can't Read"). Within weeks, the trade book was selling at the rate of twelve thousand copies a month. Bennett Cerf, at Random House—which, as Dr. Seuss's usual publisher, had secured the trade rights on the book—bought out Houghton Mifflin's rights on the school edition and, without so much as a backward glance, launched a series based on poor, forgotten William Spaulding's scheme. The series was called Beginner Books and was edited by Geisel, his wife, and Cerf's wife, Phyllis. By 1960, Beginner Books had eighteen titles and was bringing in more than a million dollars a year.

"The Cat in the Hat" stood for more than the idea that reading ought to be learned by phonics. It also stood for the idea that language skills—and many other subjects—ought be taught to young children not through primers and textbooks but through stories. Once this idea was accepted by the schools, it transformed the substance of children's books. What transformed their appearance was the result of technology. A few years after "The Cat in the Hat" came out, full-color reproduction became technically and economically feasible; and this, along with a rapidly expanding school-library market (buoyed up by vast government support, back in the days when government was still in the business of buoying things up), helped draw serious artists into the field. "Painterly illustration" for children's picture books came into being.

The representative figure in these developments is Leo Lionni, whose autobiography, "Between Worlds" (Knopf; $35), was published this year. Lionni was an émigré from Fascist Italy who became an influential New York advertising director and graphic designer. He designed museum catalogues like the one for the 1955 "Family of Man" exhibition, and covers for glossy magazines like *Fortune*. In 1959, when he was nearly fifty, he wrote his first children's book, "Little Blue and Little Yellow," the story of two adorable young blobs of color whose nascent friendship is threatened by the irrational color prejudices of their parent blobs. The story is a lot more didactic than "The Cat in the Hat," and it indicates pretty clearly the direction that children's books were taking. Lionni went on to produce thirty books for children, books that combine high-quality design with obvious and enduring teachability. "The Girl with the Brown Crayon" (Harvard; $18.95) is an account by the veteran educator Vivian Gussin Paley of her final kindergarten class, in which her curriculum consisted entirely of the collected works of Leo Lionni.

It's easy to be misled about the quality of contemporary children's literature. When you walk into the children's section of a superstore like Borders, you run straight into display tables piled high with tie-ins—books associated with, or spun off from, television programs and movies.This season the biggest stacks are on the "Hercules" tables: "Hercules" board books, "fun to touch" books, pop-up books, picture books, young-adult books, coloring books, and sticker books.

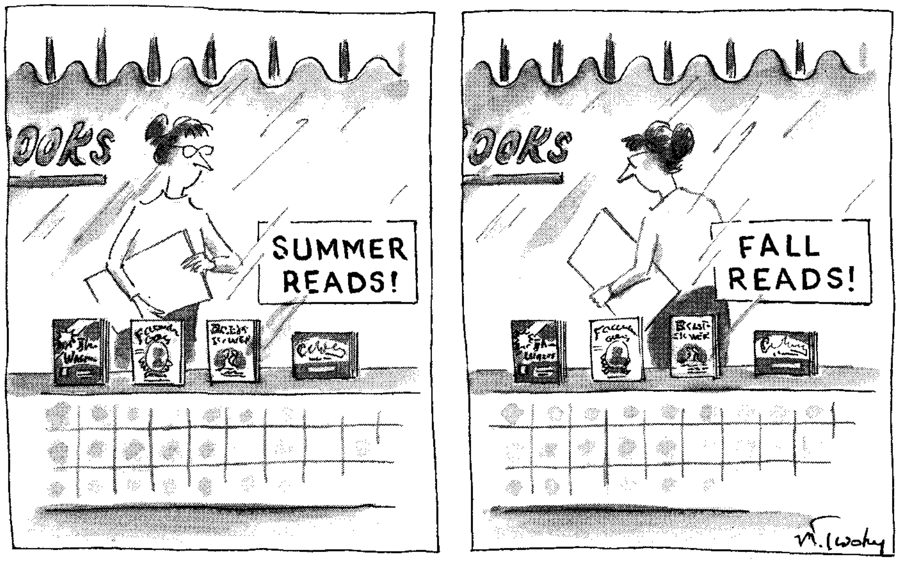
The tie-in phenomenon does cheapen. The "Magic School Bus" books got noticeably flimsier after the TV series started. But once you forge past the display tables, or walk down the street to a more selective bookstore, the surroundings get upscale rather rapidly. When you walk into a well-stocked independent children's bookstore, like Books of Wonder, in New York City, the first thing you're likely to be struck by is the enormous variety of expensive and lavishly illustrated picture books on the shelves. The second thing is the somewhat esoteric nature of their contents. There is nothing mass-market about most of this material. A lot of it, in fact, has been carefully crafted to fit a rather particular niche. "Day of the Dead" (Harcourt Brace; $14), for example, written by Tony Johnston and illustrated by Jeanette Winter, is a tiny picture book about a traditional Mexican holiday that commemorates the deceased. Neither the title nor the price is likely to commend it to parents looking for plausible bedtime reading material; the thing seems virtually guaranteed to start an endless discussion about dead people, the last subject in the world compatible with what reading aloud is intended to induce—nightmare-free sleep. But the book is nicely suited to a first-grade teacher with a "Mexico" curriculum. And, in fact, there are several Day of the Dead books on the market competing for that very slot.

What is exceptional about most of the new picture books is the quality of the illustrations. The art in picture books seems, since full-color reproduction became routine, to have reached a point not unlike the point reached by special effects in Hollywood movies: each book tries to outdo the rest of the field in splendor and authenticity. The copyright page has started to resemble the credit sequence at the end of a film. "The illustrations in this book were done in acrylics on Strathmore Bristol paper," we read on the copyright page of "Day of the Dead." "This book was printed on totally chlorine-free Nymolla Matte Art paper."

Gerald McDermott's "Musicians of the Sun" (Simon & Schuster; $17), an even more visually stunning candidate for the "Mexico" curriculum—it retells an Aztec legend about how colors got into the world—has illustrations originally "rendered in acrylic fabric paint, opaque ink, and oil pastel on paper handmade in Mexico." The handsome pictures in Baba Wagué Diakité's "The Hunterman and the Crocodile" (Scholastic; $15.95), a traditional fable with a West African setting, were originally painted on ceramic tile. For Laurence Yep's "The Khan's Daughter: A Mongolian Folktale" (Scholastic; $16.95), Jean and Mou-sien's jacket painting "was executed in acrylic against a gold-leaf background. Other paintings, ornaments, and border frames were executed in watercolor. The ornaments are based on motifs found in Mongolian art." For "One Grain of Rice" (Scholastic; $19.95), a tale set in India, the author and illustrator Demi "created the artwork using Chinese brushes and a variety of paints and inks."

Cynics who wonder whether all this might have been done just as effectively on a computer can buy Audrey and Don Wood's "Bright and Early Thursday Evening" (Harcourt Brace; $16) for comparison. The Woods have collaborated on a number of unusually ornate picture books, such as "King Bidgood's in the Bathtub" (1985). "Bright and Early Thursday Evening" is a story about a girl who dreams she is dead, and the illustrations are appropriately creepy. These were "rendered in Fractal Painter and Adobe Photoshop on a Macintosh Power PC computer equipped with a Wacom digital art pad." "This book," it is further explained, "was printed with soya-based inks on Nymolla Matte Art paper." (It doesn't say whether the paper is also chlorine-free. A taste test suggests that it probably is.) But the words and the art seem peculiarly mismatched. The text is aimed at toddlers; the images of the girl, which are from scanned-in photographs, use a model who is clearly pubescent, someone you might see in a fashion ad.

The Daliesque effect of the pictures in "Bright and Early Thursday Evening" will probably not appeal to grownups brought up on the line drawings of "Winnie the Pooh." But that sort of supersaturated color evidently does appeal to many small children. David Kirk's "Miss Spider's New Car" (Scholastic/Callaway; $16.95) is a sequel to his very popular "Miss Spider's Tea Party" (1994) and "Miss Spider's



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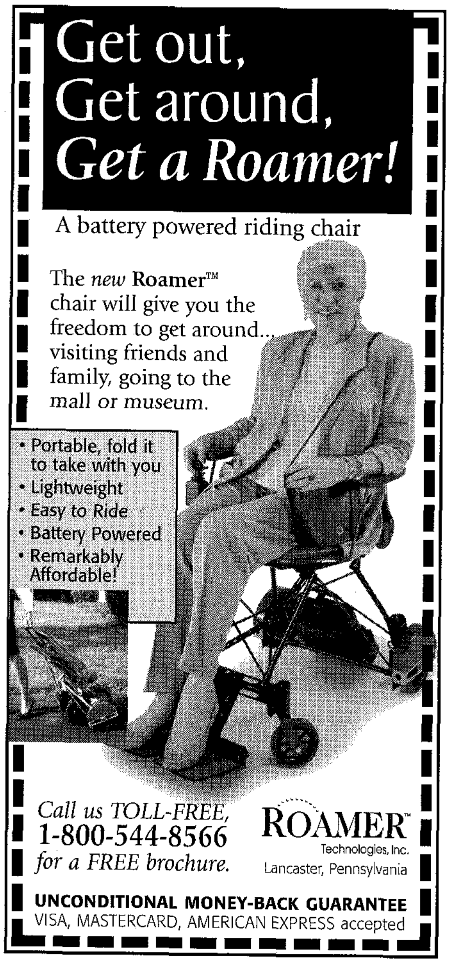

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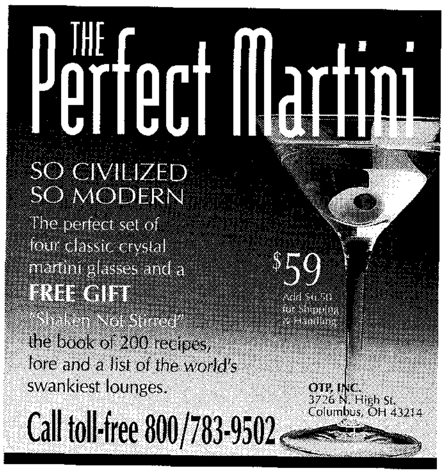

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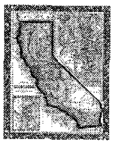

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Wedding" (1995). The overly cute, overly vibrant illustrations ("oils on paper") seek to create an illusion of three-dimensionality by rendering the backgrounds out of focus—as though this cartoon world had been photographed, or as though the book were actually a video. The same technique is used in the illustrations ("Liquitex acrylics and Prismacolor pencils on bristol board") for Janell Cannon's best-selling "Verdi" (Harcourt Brace; $16), a growing-up story about a young python, which is a sequel to her best-selling "Stellaluna" (1993), a growing-up story about a young fruit bat. The fruit bat, I felt, had the more compelling saga: it got mixed up with a family of birds and suffered a species-identity crisis. The python just doesn't want to turn green, which, if you are yellow to begin with, seems a relatively benign fate.

LAMAN
MURAS

Toward the extreme end of the picture-book spectrum is the book that pretends to be more than a book. The format probably dates back to "Pat the Bunny," which appeared in 1940. One impressive entry in this genre is Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson's "A Street Called Home" (Harcourt Brace; $18), a colorful twelve-section accordion book, which opens to show a street scene in what was once an old shantytown called the Blackberry Patch, in Columbus, Ohio. The human figures are drawn on doors that can be opened to reveal a short text explaining who they are (the Sockman, the Chickenfoot Woman, and so on). The book ties shut with a ribbon.

More ingenious is Art Spiegelman's "Open Me . . . I'm a Dog!" (Joanna Cotler Books/HarperCollins; $14.95), which has pop-ups, flaps to unfold, and felt-covered "dog-skin" pages, and which comes on a leash. The conceit, as we learn from the story, is that it's not really a book at all; it's a dog that's been transformed by a wizard into a book. Whether this will satisfy children who live in undersized apartments and insist on owning a real dog seems unlikely, but it's worth a try.

The purest and most arresting picture books around are the creations of the Hungarian émigré Istvan Banyai: "Zoom" (1995), "Re-Zoom" (1995), and this year's "REM: Rapid Eye Movement" (Viking-Penguin; $14.99). His books have no text at all. They are made up of full-page pictures, drawn in a meticulous, hyperrealist style, that reveal a series of transformations. In the "Zoom" books, each image becomes, on the succeeding page, a detail in a larger image, which is then revealed on the next page to be a detail in a larger image still, and so on to improbable lengths In "REM," the images metamorphose by undoing and redrawing themselves. The book begins with a picture of a pudgy homunculus drawing his own world with a pencil—a visual homage to the source of the basic idea, Crockett Johnson's "Harold and the Purple Crayon" (1955). This figure quickly begins to warp itself into a series of graphically linked but logically dissociated forms, all of which turn out to be the dream figments of a little boy.

"REM" and the "Zoom" books are clever enough for grownups to enjoy, but you can't read them aloud, because there is nothing to read. The important thing in reading aloud, of course, is the absorption of the child, but it helps if the parent can be moved a little, too. What is probably the most frequently read aloud read-aloud book ever published appeared fifty years ago, Margaret Wise Brown and Clement Hurd's "Goodnight Moon," now available in a special anniversary edition, accompanied by Leonard S. Marcus's essay "The Making of 'Goodnight Moon': A 50th Anniversary Retrospective" (HarperTrophy; $19.95). The story has a proved soporific effect on small children, but it also carries a certain poignancy for grownups. The reason is probably that, although for small children the rhythmic farewells—"Goodnight stars / Goodnight air / Goodnight noises everywhere"—evoke the thought of sleep, for parents they evoke the thought of death.

Affecting picture books need affecting stories, and these are fairly rare among the multi-ethnic animal fables that tend to dominate the format. Cynthia Zarin's "Rose and Sebastian" (Houghton Mifflin; $16), with exuberant illustrations by Sarah Durham, is a bedtime story about a little girl who makes friends with the noisy boy who lives in the apartment upstairs. It has the distinction of being a children's book about city life which is not also about "urban issues" of one kind or another; and it's sweet. Sarah Stewart's

“The Gardener” (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $15), with pleasantly busy, old-fashioned illustrations by David Small, is set in the Depression—it’s about a little girl who is sent to stay with her uncle in the city when her parents can no longer support her—but the idea of children bringing joy to weary adults has application most parents will consider universal.

A more robust sort of pleasure is afforded by an unusually brave venture—Alan Drummond’s “Moby Dick” (Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $16), which adapts Melville’s novel for small children. It preserves, amazingly, the grandiloquence of the original—“All was lost . . . lost in a vast, fizzing, bubbling, boiling whirlpool of wreckage”—and it has vigorous illustrations of ships and the sea which kids are likely to find stimulating. As do many of these picture books, it includes additional information about the topic under consideration (in this case, whaling, not Herman Melville’s quarrel with God).

THE educational turn in children’s books, joined to a resurgent moralism in social attitudes toward the use of stories, has somewhat obscured one of the oldest purposes of children’s literature, which is to explore what it means to have a body. The body is the toy they cannot take away. There is something slightly cautious and cerebral about a lot of the new picture books. One of the points of “The Cat in the Hat,” after all, is that the children in the story are precociously uptight small persons. The aim of the alarmingly polymorphous cat who intrudes on their repressed little domestic scene is clearly to introduce them—against the wishes of the household superego, that unappeasable, castrating fish—to their libidos, which he calls, employing an ancient Anglo-Saxon colloquialism, Thing One and Thing Two.

In the picture-book format, the demand for attention to the body and its deeply fascinating functions has been met head on by Kane/Miller Book Publishers through a series that began in 1993, with the publication of “Everyone Poops,” by Taro Gomi, and was followed, in 1994, by the equally blunt “The Gas We Pass: The Story of Farts,” by Shinta Cho. Both books were first published in Japan, where they apparently provoked no particular outcry of adult disgust, but until Kane/Miller took them up they

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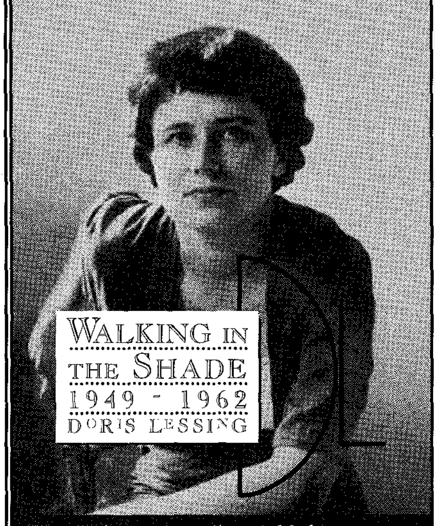

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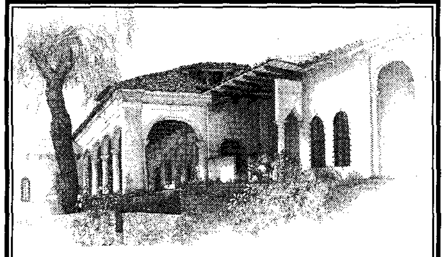

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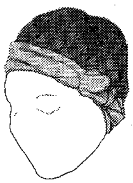

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were repeatedly rejected by American publishers. Today, there are half a million copies of "Everyone Poops" in print.

The books, translated by Amanda Mayer Stinchecum, are not intended to be silly, although they do mimic, in a subtly amusing way, the bland style of schoolroom show-and-tell ("Some farts smell bad, and some don't. When you fart after eating meat, fish, eggs or things like that, your farts smell really bad"). Kane/Miller has also brought out translations of "The Holes in Your Nose" (1994), "Contemplating Your Bellybutton" (1995), and, this year, "The Soles of Your Feet" ($11.95), by Genichiro Yagyu. About as much is done with the bottoms of the feet as could be hoped for, but feet, alas, are not farts, and it's possible that the series has reached its limit. "The Gas We Pass" remains the most popular title. The publishers think that half the copies purchased are given to adults.

Opening a picture book you were read aloud to from as a child sometimes has a madeleine effect: the old sensations suddenly come swimming back out of unconscious memory. But most adults can, even without digging out the actual book and dunking it in a cup of tea, still recall the feelings—of fright, surprise, pity, wonder—they experienced when they started to read stories on their own. In the business, books designed to be these first read-on-your-own stories are known as "chapter books." For several years, the top seller in this format was the Goosebumps series, by R. L. Stine. The sixty-first title is being published this fall.

The series, which started up in 1992, has not enjoyed good press, and even children sense that the books are not, shall we say, totally chlorine-free. They are certainly pulpy enough, but the reaction against them seems largely a reflection of the high standards of the rest of the industry. The Goosebumps stories are horror stories, contrived, in the hokiest ways, to make young readers' flesh creep; but, although the prose is slightly less advanced, the books are not terribly different from Franklin W. Dixon's Hardy Boys series, which was started up in 1927 and is still selling, often in abridged and politically corrected editions. The chief attraction of the Hardy Boys books was the tingle of fear they induced at the climaxes, best savored late at night by flashlight. It was certainly not the educational value or the repartee.

This summer, Goosebumps was overtaken on the series-book best-seller li by a new series—Animorphs, by K. Applegate. (R. L. Stine is a Bob; K. Applegate is a Katherine. There was n Franklin W. Dixon: the Hardy Boy were created by the syndicate that pro duced Tom Swift, Nancy Drew, the Bobb sey Twins, and more than sixty othe series.) Animorphs represents a small bu measurable advance over Goosebump The writing is fresher, and grasping th premise requires closer attention. Th Animorphs are children who have ac quired the power to morph themselve into other creatures—birds, tigers, and s on—and they are obliged to use tha power frequently in order to save th world from body-snatching aliens. It not exactly "The Magic School Bus," bu there is an effort to cram improving in formation into the interstices of the ac tion. "See, flies don't have bones," explain Jake, the narrator of a recent install ment—No. 11, "The Forgotten" (Scho lastic; $3.99)—describing what it's lik to turn yourself into a housefly. "The have an exoskeleton. Their outer shell i what holds them together in one piece. . . The proboscis was as big as my fly legs— a long, retractable hollow tube. Flies ea with the proboscis. They spit saliva al over the food, wait till it gets mushy, the suck it up." Stuff it might be useful t know.

Children's books can have many pur poses, but the most basic one must be t persuade children of something not im mediately self-evident, which is tha there is a world of stimulation and sensa tion available through print—that book can carry you out of yourself. Suspense horror, and science fiction are among th simplest ways to demonstrate this, and i some of the preteen Goosebumps an Animorphs addicts go on to get similarl absorbed in "The Lord of the Rings" an "À la Recherche du Temps Perdu" thos books will have performed their missio in the world as effectively as the mos enlightened picture book.

Which is not to say that no fine stimulants are available. "The Subtl Knife" (Knopf; $20) is the second volume of a marvellous new trilogy b Philip Pullman, entitled "His Dark Materials." The first volume, "The Golde Compass," came out two years ago. Th appeal of the make-believe element i children's stories is the suggestion tha there are secret worlds hidden behind his one—that if you just open the right door a talking cat will enter, or you will ind yourself in Wonderland or Narnia or the land of Oz. It is an extremely poent suggestion, for, as John Goldthwaite proposes in "The Natural History of Make-Believe" (1996), it is connected to he religious sense. "Children are natural heists," he says. "They are also superstiious and animistic and therefore natually pantheistic and pagan." One of the illiest things about animation is that for mall children the world is already fully animated. Cartoon animation merely lattens the world out, draining it of its naturally mysterious vitalism.

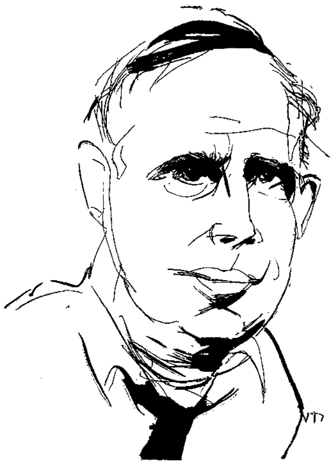
"The Golden Compass" and "The Subtle Knife" are filled with this vitalsm. The premise is that there are bilions of parallel worlds in the universe, one created each time an event that night have turned out one way turns out another way instead. The turn not taken s taken, but in an alternate world, which evolves accordingly. Pullman's first volume is set in such an alternate world; the second begins in our world, but the characters are soon able, thanks to the discovery of a "window" between the worlds, to move back and forth among three of them.

The protagonist of "The Golden Compass" is Lyra, a twelve-year-old girl; in the new volume, she hooks up with a twelve-year-old boy named Will. There are witches, armored polar bears, ghosts, and other figures of fantasy, but the most memorable invention is the dæmons. These are animal figures who, in Lyra's world, accompany human beings throughout their lives—who feel what they feel, who converse with them secretly, whom other human beings are not permitted to touch. Everyone has a dæmon appropriate to his or her character—a rat, a badger, a bird, a leopard, a snake. People think of their dæmons as their souls; to separate a person from his dæmon is regarded as the most evil torture imaginable. The story involves the discovery that someone is separating children from their dæmons. The writing is elegant and challenging, perfect for intelligent twelve-year-olds who enjoy talk of parallel universes and mysterious subatomic particles, but who have not quite outgrown witches, either, and who still like to feel scared. ♦

LAST FRONTIER

J. Anthony Lukas's book on the West at its wildest.

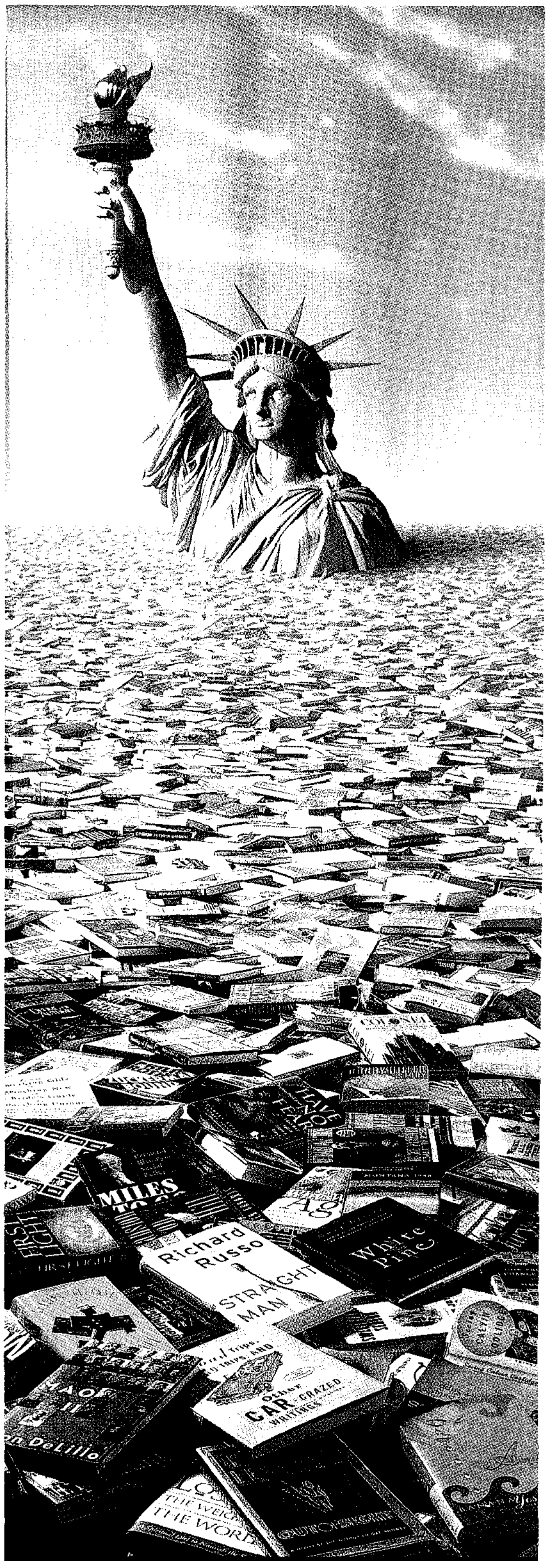
BY DAVID REMNICK



J. Anthony Lukas

On a June morning in Manhattan this year, J. Anthony Lukas set off from home to meet with his editor to go over some late changes on his new book, "Big Trouble" (Simon & Schuster; $30). There are few writers of value who do not approach the end of a long project with at least some sense of dread, a self-lacerating concession that the book is not so much finished as abandoned and that positively everyone will see all the holes that are surely there, all the illogic, the shortcuts, the tape, the glue. Finishing is more about terror than about exhilaration. In a way, it is like beginning.

Lukas was in an especially dark mood this spring, telling friends that after seven years of research and writing he had failed his story, a spectacular and deliciously ambiguous murder trial set in Idaho at the turn of the century. His author's dread, as Blaine Harden described it in an article for the *Washington Post Magazine*, was symptomatic of a persistent illness, his depression. At the same time, though, Lukas seemed to be going forward, working on the details that always precede publication. After the meeting



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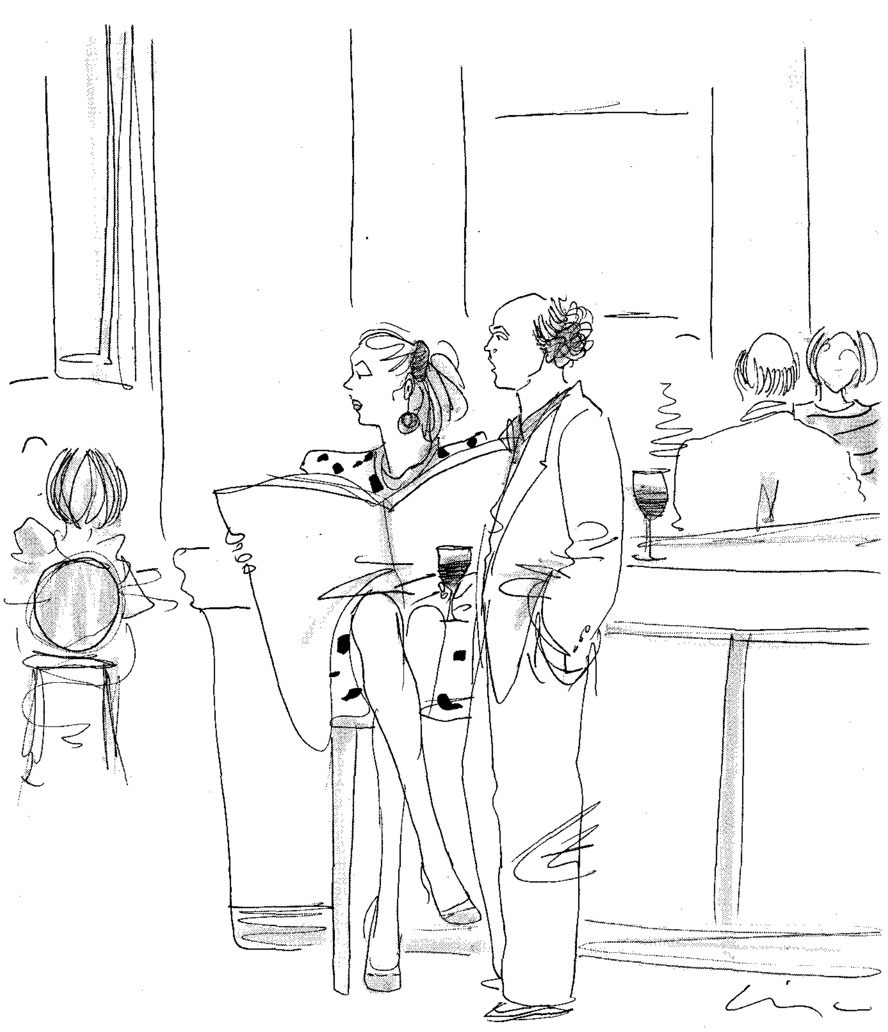

"I tip waiters twenty per cent, but actors ten per cent."

• •

with his editor in midtown, he went on to see his therapist. In 1941, Lukas's mother, who had been diagnosed as a manic-depressive, walked out the doctor's door, found some shards of glass on the ground, and slit her throat. There were other suicides in the family. Now family history repeated itself. Following his appointment with the therapist, Lukas went home to his apartment and strangled himself with what the New York medical examiner's office called a "cord-like material." He was sixty-four.

In the scorpion jar that passes for a "literary community" in New York, there are few who emerge unmarked. Lukas did. He was almost a cult figure among journalists and nonfiction writers. He had legs and he had language and he was honest. He never cheated the work; he seemed as he got older to work even harder. As a reporter at the *Times* in the sixties, he won a Pulitzer Prize for local reporting and, as a correspondent filed a blizzard of dispatches from the Congo and India and the trial of the Chicago Seven. (One of his incidenta contributions to the culture was to force the *Times* into inventing the phrase "barnyard epithet" in place of "bullshit,' a word uttered with some regularity by the Chicago defendants.) Lukas worked at the paper for ten years. Finally, like his *Times* contemporaries Gay Talese and David Halberstam, he could no longer bear the daily compromises necessary to get along on a paper, and so he quit. Unlike Talese and Halberstam, who wrote some of their best books in their thirties and early forties, Lukas took a while before he found his bearings as a book writer. "Nightmare: The Underside of the Nixon Years" (1976) was an excellent overview of the scandal, but Watergate, after all, was not really his story—it was Woodward and Berntein's—and it was too early to write the ruly definitive history.

Lukas's masterpiece came later, in 985, with "Common Ground," which won every prize imaginable. Subtitled A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families," "Common Ground" is a work of superhuman industry, structural ingenuity, original storytelling, and profound understanding of our most vexed political and social ssue: race. Lukas used the intersection of three emblematic families to describe one of the most complicated crises of he late sixties: desegregation and busing n Boston. Without losing the narrative energy of his story, Lukas also wove in portraits of the mayor, Kevin White; the owners and the editors of the Boston *Globe;* the judge who put together the desegregation plan, Arthur Garrity; the eader of the anti-busing movement, Louise Day Hicks; and the reluctant eader of the Catholic Church, Humberto Cardinal Medeiros. The book ran more than six hundred pages, and yet there was never a patch of boredom or relaxed writing. Steering clear of rhetorcal bullying and sanctimony, Lukas revealed the agonies on all sides of the busing crisis.

While "Common Ground" drew mainly on interviews with living participants in the Boston busing case, "Big Trouble" is set too long ago for that kind of work. The sources for "Big Trouble" were in libraries, archives, museums, private collections. The story begins with the murder, in December, 1905, of the former governor of Idaho, Frank Steunenberg. At the turn of the century, especially in Western states like Colorado and Idaho, workers began to go to war with the owners of the mines, the railroads, and other big corporations. Steunenberg, who was seen as a defender of the owners against the mining unions, was a casualty of that war. He was killed by a bomb outside his home in Caldwell, a boomtown near Boise. The first fifty pages of the book follow Steunenberg from his bed on a Saturday morning in late December to his last walk through the streets of Caldwell, and are a tour de force of nonfiction writing. Lukas's opening is dense with telling detail: the history of Caldwell ("founded by an eastern con man, named for a Leavenworth grafter, bankrolled with Kansas and Pennsylvania money to serve the interests of

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7 SPAC + EMAN (rev.)
8 HUG + E
9 ROLE (*roll* hom.)
10 RAN + KLE (*elk* rev.)
11 ARE(N)A
15 SC + I F + I
16 IN PART (anag.)
17 O + GLE (*leg* anag.)
18 O + PAL
19 T(OILS)OME
20 TASTED (hidden)

DOWN
1 A + S(H)CAN (ref. Ashcan School)
2 SPUR(RING O)N
3 OCEANS (anag.)
4 S(MO)KY
5 H(ALL) OF FA + ME
6 K + NEE
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the Union Pacific Railroad"), the Queen Anne mansions, the ranch hands and the drummers, the stables near Steunenberg's houses, "dray horses and fancy pacers, shifting in their stalls."

Without overloading the narrative with potted history or eclipsing the story of Steunenberg's Saturday errands, Lukas gives us a sense of the man's politics, his character, his income, his family, his pleasure in stepping in out of the cold to read the local papers at the Saratoga, the main hotel in town. We have a sense of the bad end we're heading to when, suddenly, right before the end of the chapter, Lukas sneaks in what is known in newspapers as "the billboard graf," the paragraph that announces, if a little too overtly, his theme:

> On that snowy night of the governor's walk, Caldwell looked for all the world like the quintessential nineteenth-century American community, sufficient unto itself, proof against an uncaring world. But there were ample warnings that this Currier and Ives print was no longer quite true to life. Many in town had felt the first whiff of anxiety that America's social landscape was changing, that corrupt forces were abroad in the land, relentlessly impinging on the autonomy Caldwell had taken for granted.

The threats to Steunenberg and his patrons are the threats of race and class, of swarthy immigrants from Europe and Asia, of impudent trade unions, and the "relentless encroachments of class distinction." A few paragraphs later, Steunenberg, returning home, is blown to bits as he goes through the garden gate to his house. Someone who knew Steunenberg's habits had wired a bomb to the gatepost.

Lukas was in possession of an enormous story, for the Steunenberg murder became the emblematic political event of the moment, and the investigation and the trial that followed attracted the sort of cast of characters that begins to sound like some unwritten E. L. Doctorow novel. The investigation was led by James McParland, ace detective of the Pinkertons; McParland's previous feat had been to infiltrate and bring down the notorious Molly Maguire gang that terrorized Pennsylvania. The investigation turned up a man named Harry Orchard, who confessed to planting the bomb. Orchard also fingered three leaders of the Western Federation of Miners—most notably, Big Bill Haywood, who was the founder of the Wobblies. Clarence Darrow was one of the lead defense lawyers, while Willia Borah, a flamboyant prosecutor, repr sented the state. Playing secondary rol were Theodore Roosevelt, who was d ing everything he could to head off wh he saw as an approaching class war i the West; the actress Ethel Barrymor who watched the trial; the great pitch Walter Johnson, who came to town t play ball; the railroad magnate E.H. Ha riman; a spy known only as Operative 2 and so on. Not only does the reader g the full-dress theatrical thrill of the investigation and the trial but there a also set pieces that run twenty, thirty, c forty pages on the rising power of th Supreme Court in the era of Olive Wendell Holmes and John Marsha Harlan, a history of the Pinkertons, textured portrait of American socialis and its various warring factions, a history of the all-black 24th Infantry Regiment, an analysis of the effect of European immigration to the big cities, history of American newspapers and th nascent ethos of fairness and objectivity. There are shorter riffs on the role o fraternal societies such as the Elks an the Odd Fellows, baseball, theatre, popular songs.

In the age of self-regard, when slende memoir is the most celebrated strain i nonfiction, "Big Trouble" is gigantic an generous. There are times, however, whe the reader feels overfed. Some of the se pieces that are more tangential to th main narrative—Ethel Barrymore's career, for instance—go on too long, and as the pages add up, a certain impatience to get back to the story makes itself felt. But, in all, Lukas was wrong: h had not failed. With "Common Ground, he'd written a classic in the literature o race in America, and with "Big Trouble" he entered a less trafficked realm the subject of class conflict, and wrote second lasting work. Some small part o his personal tragedy is that he neve knew the extent of his achievement. ◆

LIFE IS A CIRCUS

[*From the Coos County Democrat*]

In last week's Democrat, some words wer transposed through a typesetting and proofreading error. The paragraph that began "Occasionally circus elephants spent 95 percen of their lives chained by two legs . . ." shoul have read "A majority of circus elephants . . ." while the paragraph that began "A majority of circus elephants go mad . . ." shoul have read "Occasionally, circus elephants . . ."

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SPACE IS THE PLACE

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FALL FIRSTS

Débuts in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.

AGDALENA THE SINNER, by Lilian Faschinger; translated from the German by Edna McCown (HarperCollins; $24). In this cheerfully ironic, relentlessly allegorical novel, Magdalena kidnaps a priest, takes him in her Puch motorcycle sidecar to a desolate grove, and ties him to an acacia tree. There, amid a flurry of allusions to Milton, Dante, and various European philosophers, she begins to confess her sins. "Had I arrived at the idea of forcing someone to hear me out sooner, perhaps I would not have become a murderess and killed seven men," she muses to her horror-stricken captive, who soon falls in love with her himself.

HE BEAR COMES HOME, by Rafi Zabor (Norton; $25). The fearsome hero of this first novel, an alto saxophonist with awesome lung capacity, is in fact a talking bear—an affable, unlikely figure who fits quite easily into the nonchalant demimonde of jazz. ("So you really are a bear," a techie says on first encounter. "I thought maybe it was a nickname, but no, huh.") Zabor's knack for detail makes the absurd premise believable (Bear's human girlfriend, for instance, doesn't like it when he calls her "honey") and neatly turns the weighty subject—the painful and ungainly growth of an artist—into a comic gem.

NRAVELLING, by Elizabeth Graver (Hyperion; $22.95). Aimee Slater is the spirited and deep-feeling narrator of Graver's historical novel, which is set among the farms and mill towns of nineteenth-century New England. At fifteen, ashamed of her newfound sexual hunger, she runs away to Lowell, Massachusetts, to seek redemption and independence as a weaver. A year later, she returns home in disgrace. The subsequent story of how she makes a life on her own terms while struggling to become reconciled with her family is a pleasure, quiet and increasingly gripping. In images as simple and specific as that of Aimee's blind rabbit sniffing its salt lick, Graver endows the habits of coping with a profound dignity.

HE KILLER, by Patrícia Melo; translated from the Portuguese by Clifford E. Landers (Ecco; $23). For Máiquel, an unemployed young husband and father in São Paulo, life is a choice between screwing and getting screwed; yet in a bleak landscape of 9-mm. automatics, cocaine, and crooked politicians, the latter is tough to avoid. To uphold his machismo, our antihero pursues a career in "security"—the homicidal kind—which he stumbles upon during a visit to the dentist and undertakes with dispassionate dedication. The jolts that this Brazilian thriller delivers come not from the repeated instances of gore but from Máiquel's recurrent longing for basic human needs—love, salvation, a spiffy pair of shoes.

RCHIBALD COX: CONSCIENCE OF A NATION, by Ken Gormley (Addison-Wesley; $30). This biography is exciting because its subject handled one political hot potato after another, first as a member of Truman's Wage Stabilization Board and then as Kennedy's Solicitor General, arguing civil-rights and reapportionment cases. With Johnson's accession, Cox returned to teaching at Harvard Law School, whereupon the university put him in charge of handling student riots in the explosive years from 1968 to 1971. In May of 1973, Cox agreed to serve as Watergate Special Prosecutor. As many people recall, the following October Nixon ordered Attorney General Elliot Richardson to fire Cox, thereby setting off the famous "Saturday Night Massacre," which enraged the American public and doomed his Administration. Gormley writes as an admirer, and no wonder: Cox is a living oxymoron—an extreme moderate—whose steadiness is exemplary.

THE SPIRIT CATCHES YOU AND YOU FALL DOWN, by Anne Fadiman (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $24). In 1982, a few months after the Lees' fourteenth child, Lia, was born, her sister slammed the front door of their apartment, in Merced, California, and Lia experienced her first epileptic seizure. The Lees, a Hmong family from the mountains of Laos, believed that Lia's soul had been frightened out of her body and lost, but the harried, compassionate doctors at the local hospital believed otherwise. As Fadiman follows Lia's story, she describes with extraordinary skill the colliding worlds of Western medicine and Hmong culture—in one instance, Hmong women discover that their government-issue contraceptive pills make great garden fertilizer—yet she remains exquisitely attuned to the interconnectedness of things.

LAST DAYS IN CLOUD CUCKOOLAND: DISPATCHES FROM WHITE AFRICA, by Graham Boynton (Random House; $24). An impressionistic account of the end of white-ruled Africa, by a journalist who was raised in Rhodesia. Mr. Boynton spares neither the European colonizers, who so cruelly treated the Africans they displaced, nor the current governments of black Africa, which have generally concentrated on tribal vendettas and organized looting of their nations' wealth instead of trying to improve the lives of their citizens. It's a sad tale, made sadder by the author's regret that there is no longer a place for him in the land where he grew up.

APOLOGY FOR WANT, by Mary Jo Bang (New England; $25 cloth, $11.95 paper). The title of Mary Jo Bang's book of poems is to be understood as both an apology and an apologia; similarly, its "want" refers to both the absence of desire and desire itself, neatly epitomizing the paradoxes of a striking first collection. Here is a chronicle of scars from touch delivered or from touch withheld. Never weakened by self-pity, these are the poems of a shrewd clinician making the psychological rounds, and their feminism is the more powerful for being implicit (as in the poem "The First Room Is a Woman," which plays on the vulgar German synecdoche *Frauenzimmer*, discussed by Freud). "Through small but audacious acts of theft," she writes, "the *I* becomes a self."

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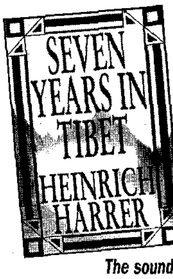

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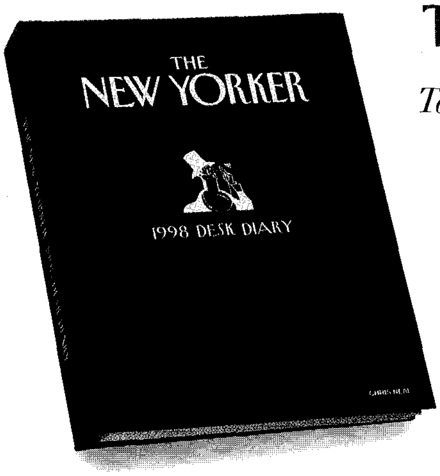
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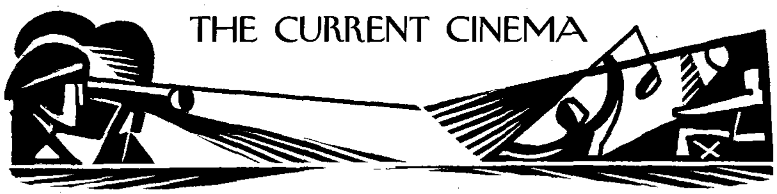


THE CURRENT CINEMA

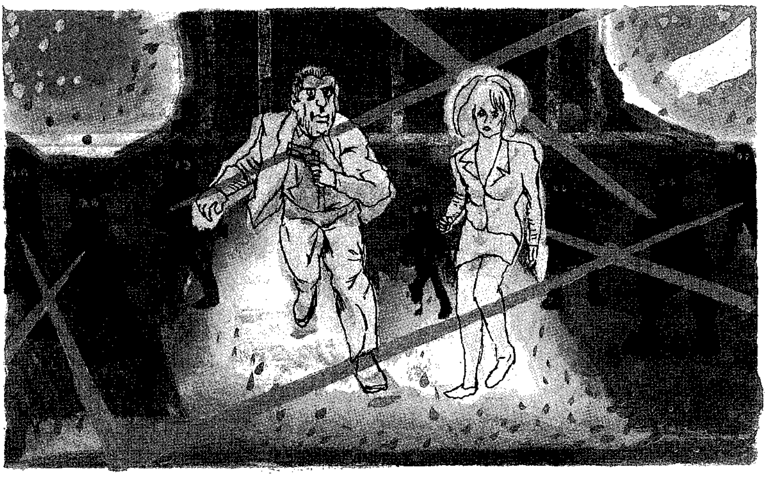
GOING NUCLEAR

Realpolitik meets big-budget thriller in "The Peacemaker."

BY ANTHONY LANE

LET'S have a look at Thomas Devoe. Tom, as played by George Clooney, is a strapping, crop-haired olonel in the United States military. Even by the standards of Special Operations, Tom is special. He speaks good demotic Russian. He gets arrested in bar brawls. He reverses cars at twice the speed that nost of us manage to go forward. As a combat veteran, he is so heavily decorated that the left side of his chest looks like an early asper Johns. In the course of two hours, we get to watch Tom doing what he does best. He turns a charming and apparently unpoliced old quarter of Vienna into a furnace of charred cars. He interviews a businessman by mashing his nose. He leads a trio of attack helicopters over enemy territory, eliminates a truck, and roughs up a Russian general. Finally, exercising a privilege normally reserved for visiting Presidents, he reduces midtown Manhattan to a rictus of gridlock and panic. And what is the name of this tender tale? "The Peacemaker." You know, like Gandhi.

Written by Michael Schiffer and directed by Mimi Leder, "The Peacemaker" is not a thoughtful film, but it does encourage you to reflect on what exactly is meant by peace in these volatile times. And the answer is: A total ban on nuclear explosions in New York City. Especially around East Forty-fourth Street, near the United Nations. Nukes elsewhere, you understand, are less of a problem; early in the movie, we get to witness a full-blown detonation, somewhere on a train in the Ural Mountains. Since the end of the Cold War, this kind of thing has become quite acceptable in the visual etiquette of Hollywood: the nuke has risen from planet-wrecker to style accessory in one easy decade. The Schwarzenegger of "True Lies," for instance, kissed Jamie Lee Curtis against the fetching backdrop of a mushroom cloud, with neither of them too worried by the prospect of losing their hair in the near future; "The Peacemaker" is more horribly beautiful, with its pure whiteout and tidal wave of fire. Later in the film, somebody mentions major fallout across Europe, but so what? It's only Europe.



Clooney and Kidman: saving the world leaves no time to flirt.

The Urals incident looks like a botch or a political statement but is in fact a diversionary tactic, designed to conceal the theft of nine more warheads. So Colonel Devoe links up with Dr. Julia Kelly (Nicole Kidman), a nuclear egghead, and together they fly over from Washington to sort out the mess. (Nothing is ever sorted out between these two; they flirt in their opening scenes and then drop it, as if their parents

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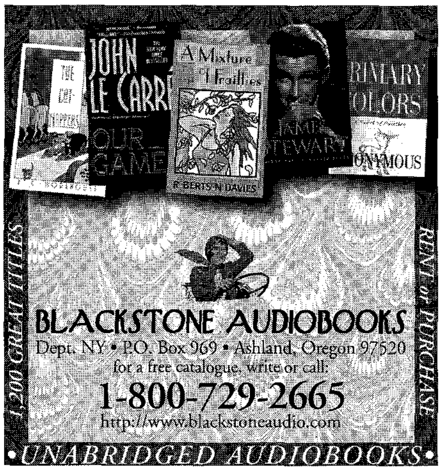

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had told them to sit up and behave.) Devoe succeeds in recovering all the bombs except one, which is earmarked for a radical Bosnian piano player named Dusan (Marcel Iures). At least, I *think* he's Bosnian. Dusan himself proclaims, "I am a Serb, I am a Croat, I am a Muslim," which is slightly unhelpful, and which suggests that the screenwriter is hedging his bets.

To be fair, "The Peacemaker" does make a semi-serious effort to confront existing political conditions: there are sequences set in Eastern Europe, and discussions of nuclear proliferation, that would have been hastily excised from the more brazen thrillers of the last few years. This hint of responsibility should be a welcome relief; even I, with my congenital weakness for gung-ho pictures, found myself slumping beneath the redneck wahoo of "Independence Day," and I have to say that I came out of "Air Force One" feeling like Noam Chomsky. Leder's film actually tries to envisage the world beyond American shores as more than a source of armed threats and funny accents; and yet, in the end, there is something equally condescending in its small gestures toward realpolitik. How could anything more substantial survive the realästhetik of the big-budget thriller? Dusan travels to New York in order to strike at the U.N., which he blames in some obscure way for the death of his wife and daughter. We see them, in flashback, falling prey to a Sarajevo sniper—a partisan act, presumably, to which Dusan might have been expected to launch a partisan response. So why drag the U.N. into it? The answer, I fear, is that Leder wanted just enough character and motive to power the story to a certain point. After that, they could both be jettisoned, leaving the movie to climax happily on American soil.

This devious plan, I am glad to report, doesn't quite come off, for the simple reason that Marcel Iures, who plays Dusan, is the most interesting figure in the movie. He may have crummy lines to speak, but the lines on his face tell a deeper story; Hollywood keeps hiring distinguished European actors like Iures and Rade Serbedzija (of "The Saint") for the purpose of vague villainy, and they keep on steali the show. Iures does brim with the prom of danger, all the more so because he c hardly rouse himself to fulfill it; his eyes ; at once so saturnine and so melancho that his desire to blow up the world is cau not for hysteria but for sorrow. (You c readily imagine him in the title role "Richard III," with which he recen toured Europe.) Next to Iures, Geor Clooney looks ominously lightweight; I a as vulnerable to his blowtorch smile as an one else, but did he really have to keep turned up full when the nuke was sev seconds away from ground zero? Don't t George, but cool can back into dumb. may not be entirely his fault: Leder has c rected Clooney in so many great episod of "E.R.," in which his smile is a prov anti-trauma drug, that she may ha thought he was still fiddling with an aor valve instead of a plutonium core. As in tl TV show, Leder's camera just can't st swinging, reeling round every conversatic like a Scottish dancer. "The Peacemake begins with admirable crispness—the i frared night sights of the Russian baddi give you the unfamiliar impression that yc have suddenly descended into the roastir pit of Hell—but before long it's back to fla

All in all, this is a curious choice début for DreamWorks, the thoroughbre studio set up by Steven Spielberg, Davi Geffen, and Jeffrey Katzenberg. Not sin Chaplin teamed up with Douglas Fai banks and Mary Pickford—one tends forget that the title of United Artists w strictly accurate—has there been such fuss over a new movie conglomerate. Aud ences used to recognize and look forwa to M-G-M musicals or Warner Bro gangsters; if you stood outside a theat today, however, and asked moviegoers whic company was responsible for the pictu they had just seen, they wouldn't have clue. Apart from Disney—and perhap Miramax, the black sheep of the Disne family—which studio still stamps its prod ucts with a personal style? DreamWork had a chance to do something different, bu instead they played it safe. "The Peace maker" is like any other film, only more so.

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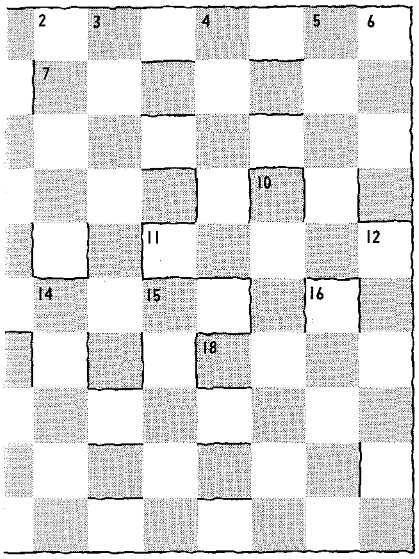
NO. 17 BY MONIKA ZOOK



CROSS

- **1** Served very hot meals for animals, including sheep (8)
- **7** Gad—following little rascal makes you better (7)
- **8** Astronauts resort to stick with no end (8)
- **9** Cover up what's tanned (4)
- **11** Playwright said to be in the red with unpaid bills (5)
- **13** Dee's receiving odd tattoos (5)
- **18** Method in Alamo defense (4)
- **19** Plot in a lady's novel (4,4)
- **20** Contrary in the matter of metrical writing (7)
- **21** People fighting a translation of "Le Roi d'Ys" (8)

OWN

- **1** Angled, if turned and dropped (6)
- **2** Fat lip I had briefly (5)
- **3** Flip took a doctors' group to court for film in 1984 (7)
- **4** Reportedly raised bakery item (5)
- **5** Still on time for contest (5)
- **6** Study the start of the Depression (4)
- **10** Silly people embracing no Italians (7)
- **12** Tired general nabbed by agent (6)
- **14** Where cowboys perform in ragged ring (5)
- **15** Imitated Demi Moore's début the wrong way (5)
- **16** Summer snake (5)
- **17** War spoils (4)

• •

he solution to puzzle No. 16 appears on page 21. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send ur fax number or a stamped, self-addressed velope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 0 West 43rd Street, New York, N. Y. 10036.

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SHOUTS & MURMURS

A NOTE ON THE TYPE

BY BRUCE McCALL

Most of the text of this book was set in Backslap Grotesque Italic Semi-Detached, a variant of Bangalore Torpedo Moribund adapted in 1867 from a matrix by the Danish chiseler Espy Sans, a character if ever there was one. In sharp contradistinction to Bangalore's racy, almost louche taste and its weakness for the cheating side of town, Backslap is a solid citizen and a joiner: A.A., A.A.A., AARP, Christmas Club. Its close cousin Mediocre Flyweight Ultra Bold is almost too sickly-sweet for words, a semi-invalid given to tiresome late-afternoon vaporings. That part of the text not set in Backslap or Bangalore—the lowercase d's, k's, and alternate z's, except after c—is Jiffy-Lube Piscataway Light Narrow, based on a sixteenth-century face closely resembling the late Edward G. Robinson. The wise will cross to the other side of the street when this burly dockwalloper of a font comes galumphing into view.

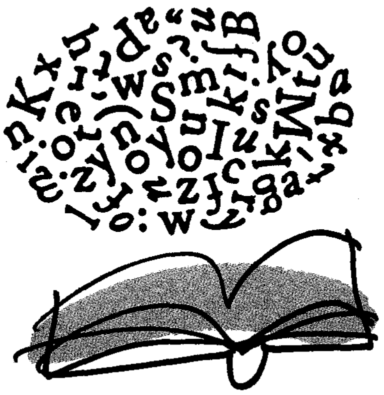
A Note on the Writer of the Note on the Type

Contrary to what the publisher would like you to think, these Notes on the Type don't just write themselves. The above note, for example, was written by yours truly, a freelance typographic blurbist who's occasionally thrown work by a brother-in-law in the production department for walking-around money while working toward my mason's degree. Such notes are by custom unsigned, as anonymous as a shop manual, so I can write any old damn thing I want, the above paragraph being a case in point: total baloney, utter nonsense, and one long leg-pull.

The information kit passed along by the book designer clearly states that the text of this book was actually set in Fishtail Equivocal Bold, a typeface favored for its way of leaning into the wind while keeping a straight back, designed in Flanders in 1916 by Siegfried Sassoon (no relation to Vidal), and related by marriage to Lydian Cursive.

A Further Note on the Type

Correct! That was yet another of my frisky typo-lingo gags. Let me ask you: why are you even reading this? The book is over. Hanging around the back of the theatre after the movie to watch the credits roll, that would be understandable. Hanging around the back of a book when there's nothing to look at but a succession of blank pages—that's pathetic. And dangerous: you could get the idea that the lawyer has forced the author to cut huge sections, or that there's been some production goof-up resulting in five or ten pages too many.



But blank pages at the back of a book are a *publishing tradition*, not unlike the Note on the Type: dropped in to break up the blankness, innocuous yet classy.

Added Note from the Writer of the Note on the Type

Maybe the insights of a ten-cents-a-word hack underwhelm you, but it has to be asked: who *cares* what typeface this book was set in except for a handful of ink-stained, pic
crazed designers with floppy me
rulers? Why are they so special, ar
way? Meanwhile, all that whini
about rising costs, razor-thin ma
gins, can't risk publishing first nov
they're so pinched, and they thr
away this precious space on a mindl
convention.

Myself, I think they're missing a l
by not selling ads back here. Cor
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subway cars, because after all, bac
page book browsers are just like on
or two-stop subway riders, strict
skimmers.

A Final Note on the Type

On the other hand, there's su
posed to be dignity in lab
Those working typographic pros pro
ably don't deserve to be ridiculed. S
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designed by Cooper Black to be se
and not heard, and widely admired f
a feel so contemporary—note the ker
ing, urgent as the final lap of the P
lio—that it makes tomorrow seem li
yesterday.

Wouldn't it be more practical-
not to mention smart marketing—
print favorite author recipes as tie-i
back here? Martha Stewart's Sto
Split Pea Soup; Master of Horror St
phen King's Ghoulish Goulash. To
Clancy's Hunt for Red Bell Peppe
Or, run classifieds.

Have serifs, will travel. Burned-o
wordsmith seeks assignment at next pr
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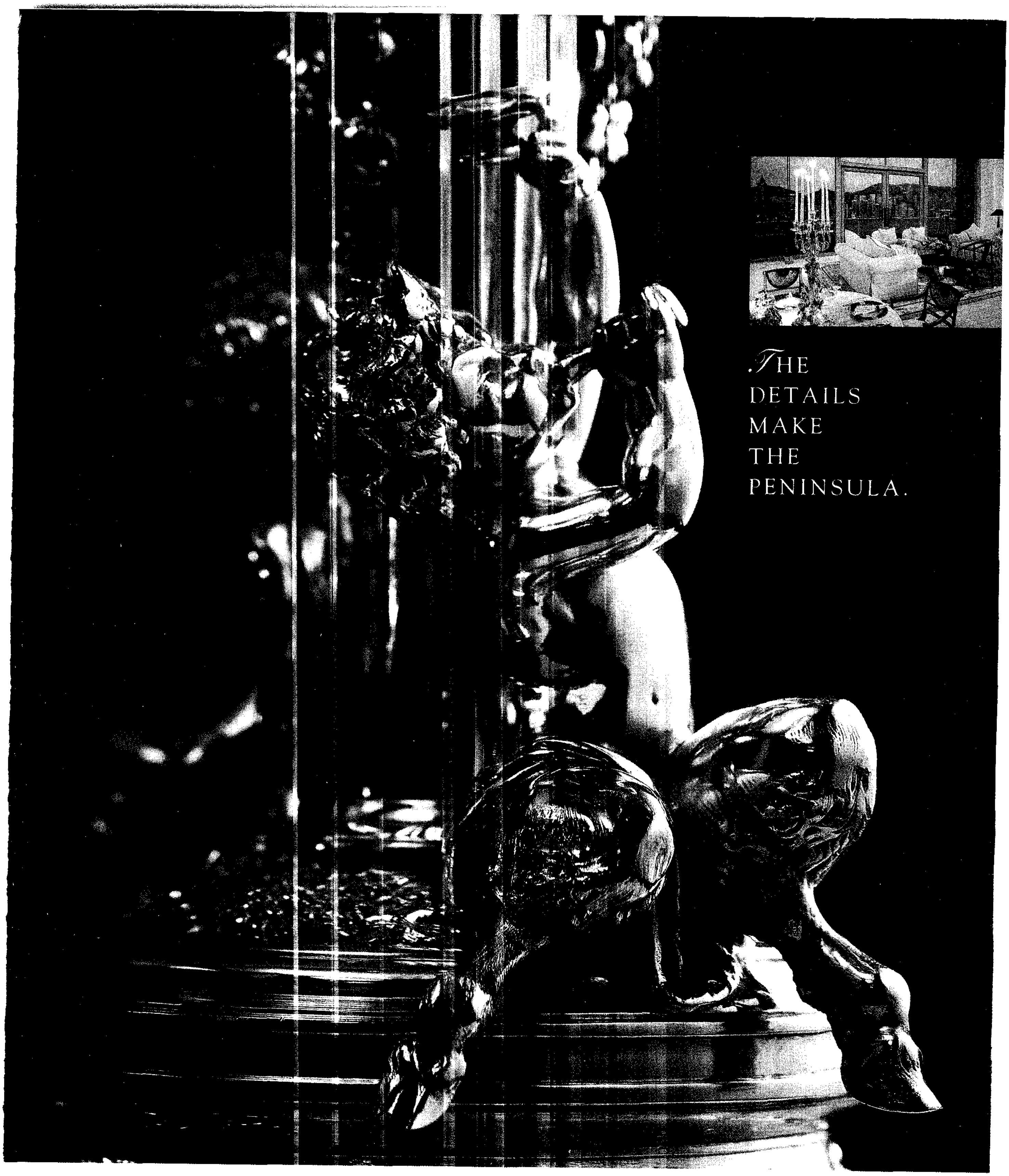
sary. No About the Type blocks, please.



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